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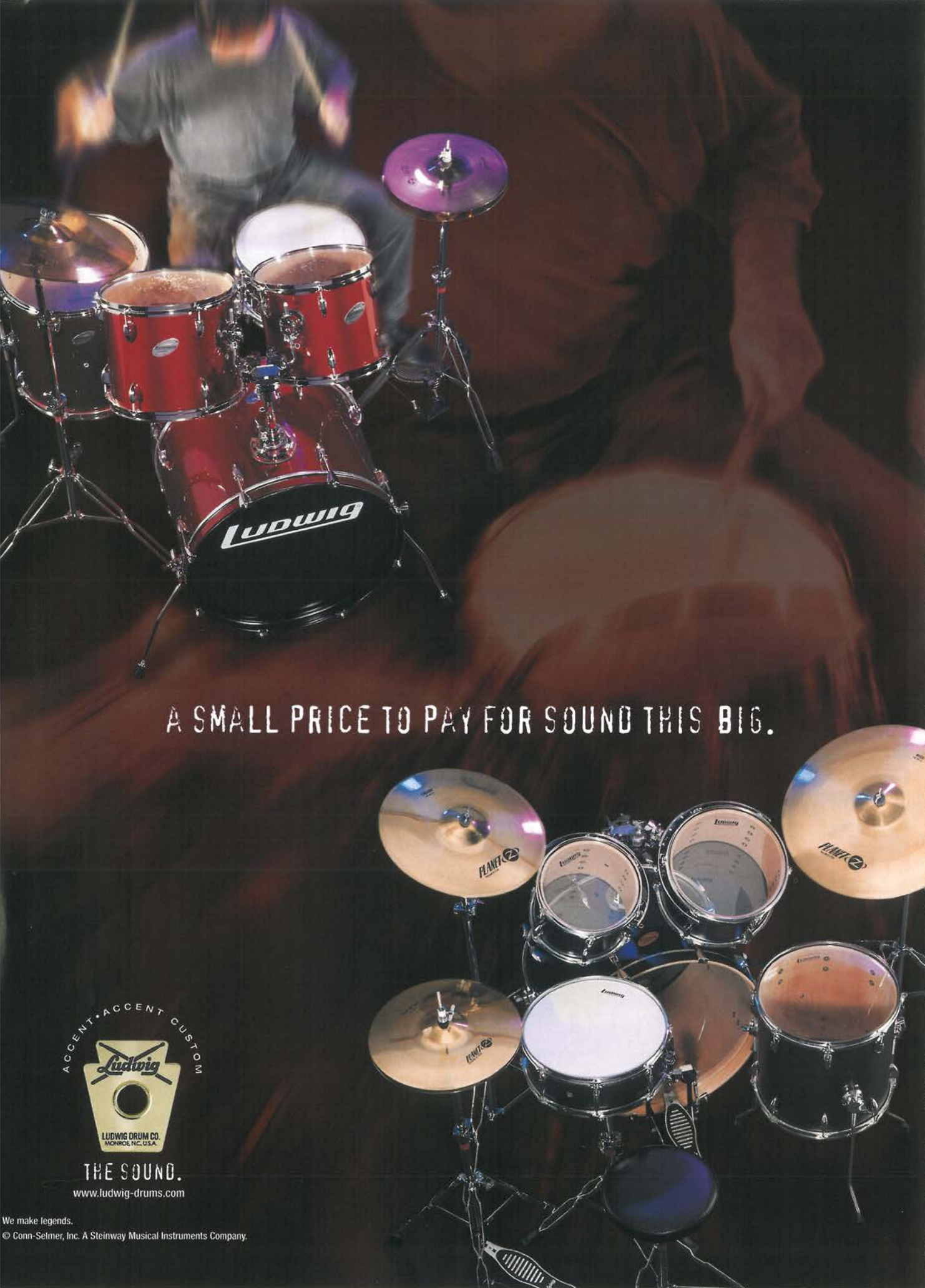
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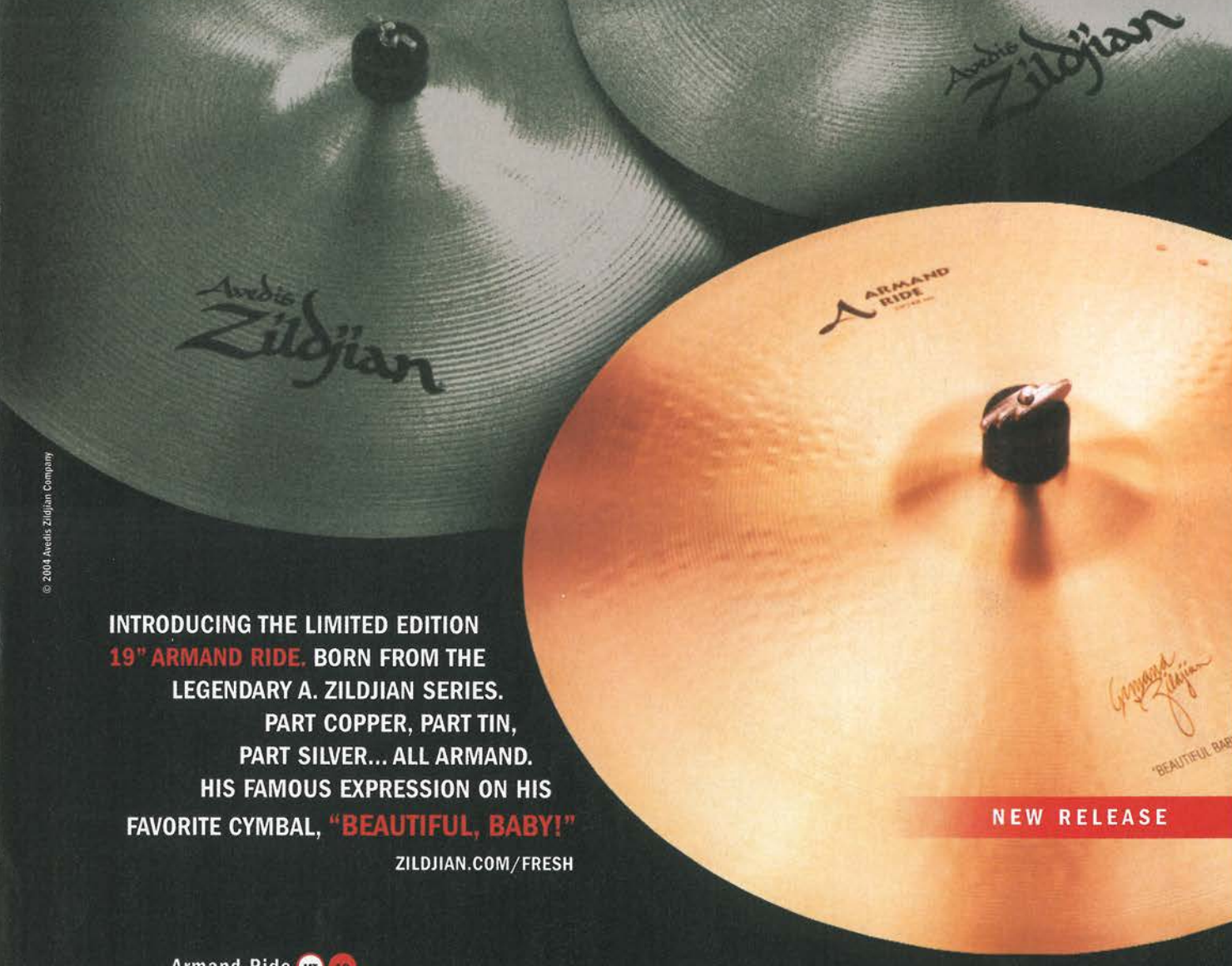

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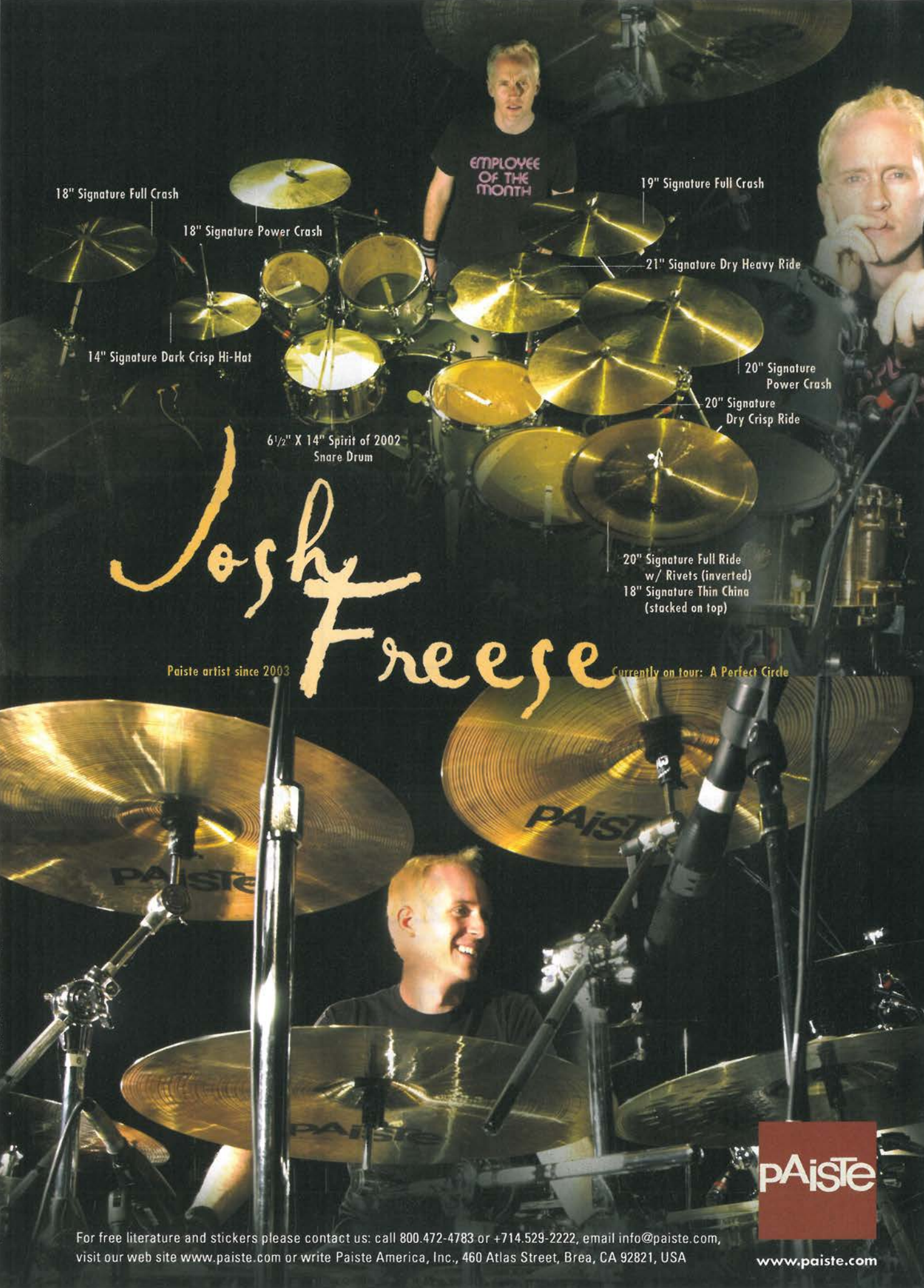
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Contents

Volume 28, Number 4

Dwight Marshall

Galactic's
Stanton Moore 42

New Orleans. Musicians down with the funk know that if you can make it there, you can make it anywhere. Drummer Stanton Moore has done just that, spreading the most righteous of grooves throughout the land.
by T. Bruce Wittet

Paul La Raia

The Strokes'
Fabrizio Moretti 62

Deceptively simple, Fabrizio Moretti's architectural rhythms with The Strokes are a big reason modern rock's darlings transcend the hype.
by Jim DeRogatis

Rick Malkin

Country Legend
Buddy Harman 72

The inventor of the country shuffle, the pioneer who brought drums to the Grand Ole Opry, the rhythm behind The Everlys, Elvis, and Johnny Cash.... You wanna talk country drumming? Start here.
by Robyn Flans

Maury Dieckamp

The Fire Theft's
William Goldsmith 120

Sunny Day Real Estate was one of the most influential bands of the '90s, a raging, emotion-filled combo who practically founded the emo style. Re-christened The Fire Theft, drummer William Goldsmith and his mates take their dramatic, brilliantly played music to a whole new artistic level.
by Gail Worley

WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! 60
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Update 20

Mike Terrana
of Rage

Jim Keltner
with Simon & Garfunkel

Poncho Sanchez
conga soul madness

Brendan Hill
of Blues Traveler

Andy Granelli
of The Distillers

Education

82 Rock Perspectives
How'd They Do That?
Metal Mysteries
by Ed Breckenfeld

84 Jazz Drummers' Workshop
Improv Playhouse 3: Tune Time
by Matt Wilson

86 Rock Charts
Bob Marley's Carlton Barrett:
Reggae History, Style, And Analysis
by Sean Conta

92 Latin Symposium
The Nanigo: More Afro-Cuban
Coordination For Drumset
by Maria Martinez

94 Off The Record
Switchfoot's Chad Butler:
The Beautiful Letdown
by Ed Breckenfeld

96 The Jobbing Drummer
Live Miking Tips:
Maximizing The Minimum
by Mark Parsons

106 Percussion Today
Becoming A Percussion
Music Major:
Early Preparation Is The Key
by Douglas Wurst

108 From The Past
Drum Legends Museum:
A Tribute To Drumming's Greats
by Mike Haid

112 Teachers' Forum
Inspiring Bored Students:
12 Tips To Keep Their
Interest Level High
by Steve Broberg

118 Club Scene
Cutting It At Open-Mic' Night:
Get Set To Sit In
by Michael Sandler

Page 146

Departments

8 An Editor's Overview
Doin' It For The Dolphins
by Adam Budofsky

10 Readers' Platform

12 It's Questionable

16 Ask A Pro
Chad Smith, Nicko McBrain,
and Mark Zonder

116 On The Move

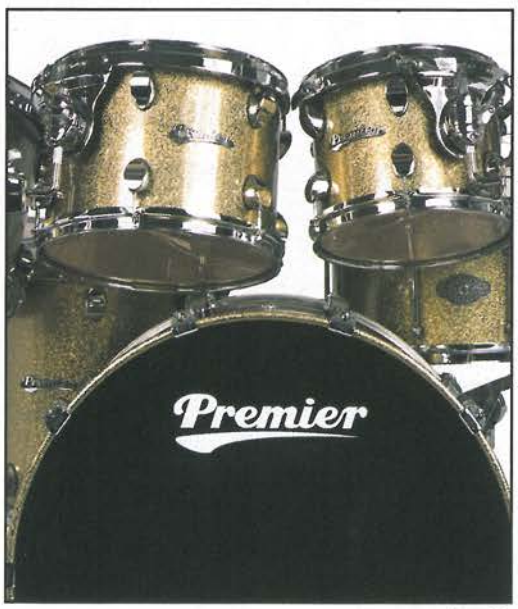
142 Showcase

146 Critique

152 Drum Market
Including Vintage Corner

154 Backbeats
Percussive Arts Society
International Convention, and more

168 Drumkit Of The Month



Page 26

Page 131

Equipment

26 Product Close-Up
Premier Series Drums

30 New Zildjian K Constantinople Rides

32 Meinl Marathon Classic Series Congas

33 Quick Looks: Oz Drumpad

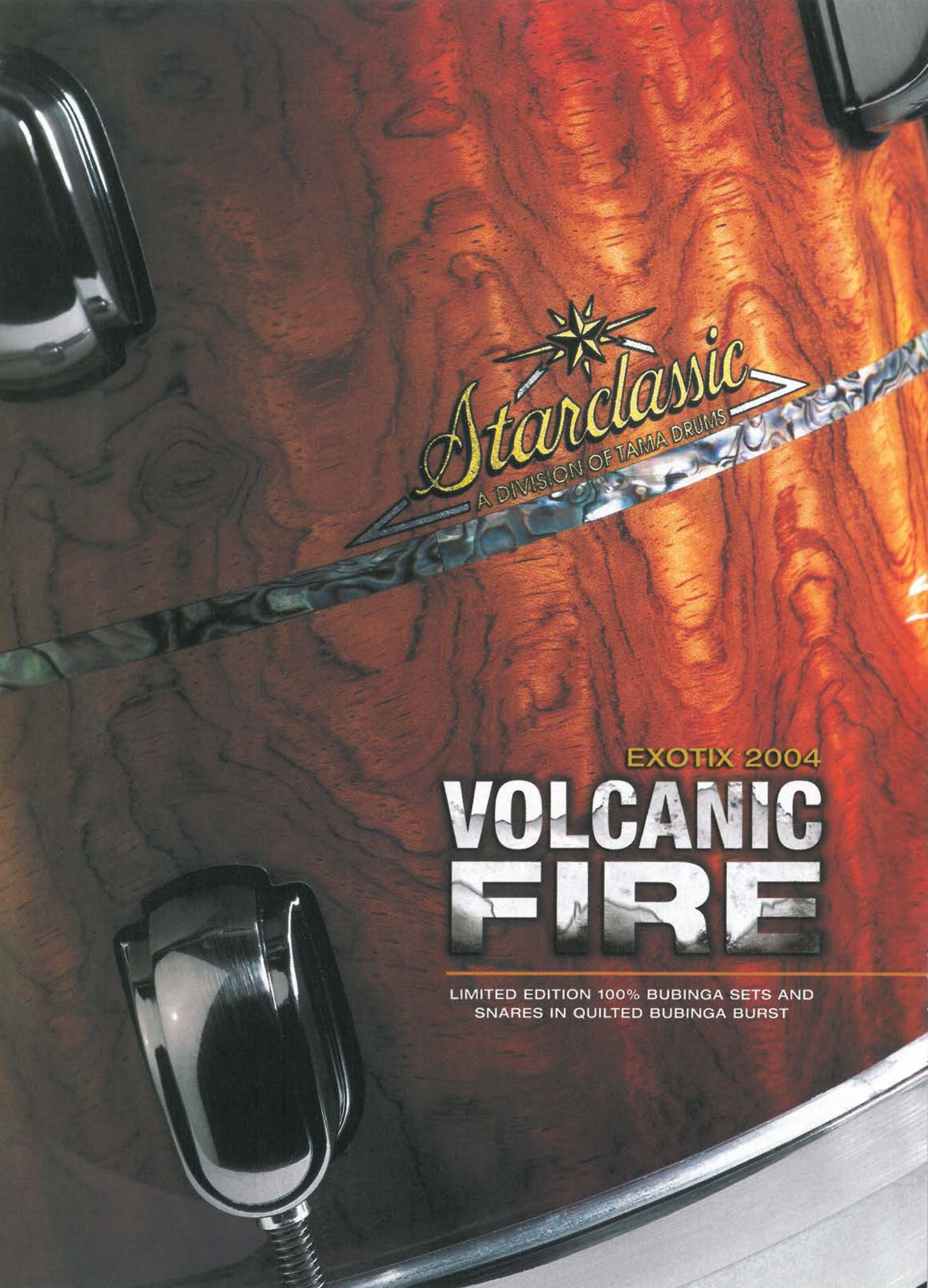
34 Canopus Club Kit And Aluminum Snare Drum

36 Toca Synergy Timbale Jingle Snare

38 Electronic Review
Roland RT Series Drum Triggers

98 Spotlight
Sol Percussion: Old-World Manufacturing Skills
Are Alive And Well
by Rick Long

130 New And Notable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The Exotix 2004 Volcanic Fire snare drum combines the warmth, and punch of Bubinga with the power and projection of a thick 9mm shell.

AN **EDITOR'S** OVERVIEW

Doin' It For The Dolphins

A year ago, if you had said to me that soon I'd become the father of triplets and that my boss of fifteen years would pass away, I'd have said that you were insane. Last fall, both of those things occurred, within a week of each other. Yep, it's one crazy world.

I suspect the full meaning of last year's events won't become totally clear for a long time to come. Sometimes, though, deep thoughts shake me from my befuddlement: "Life is short, man—so get your butt in gear, and go leave your stamp!" Or, "Accept help."

Anyone familiar with Ron Spagnardi's monumental achievement—the magazine you're holding—knows where that first bit comes from. Anyone lucky enough to be blessed (and tested) with the arrival of multiples knows about the second.

***

Scientists say that what separates us from animals is our higher intelligence. Bull dinky. Something tells me that if dolphins had their way, there'd be better music on the radio and less "reality" on TV. No, our real strength is our ability to adapt.

I used to rehearse with my band once a week, and we'd tape these long, exploratory improvs for future use. It was great fun. I also used to hang with my wife, practice my drums.... Now I change diapers, feed babies, and...well...that's about it.

And I love it. (If you're a parent, I don't need to explain this; if you're not, go ask your folks what I mean.) Still, for a creative person, the inability to work can be depressing. Recently, I started getting bummed. I missed my art. See, when the triplets arrived, my band was in the middle of recording our new album. So much for that, at least for a while.

But wait! The kids have recently moved from a three-hour feeding schedule to every four hours. If I moved my sampler and tape deck out of the basement and up to the family room, where I baby-sit every night, I should be able to sneak some work in between feedings. All those rehearsal tapes—even at just an hour a night, in a month I could edit and program this stuff down into lots of new musical ideas. When I eventually get back to my band, we'll have *so* much to work with.

***

As artists, we spend a lot of time managing our schedules and environments to best suit our creativity. Life has its own plans, though, and our neat little world can pretty easily be shaken. Oh, it might not be as dramatic as the arrival of triplets, or the death of a loved one. But you can bet, in some way or another, your life *will* change. Why not make something new out of it? C'mon, do it for the dolphins!

Adam Budofsky

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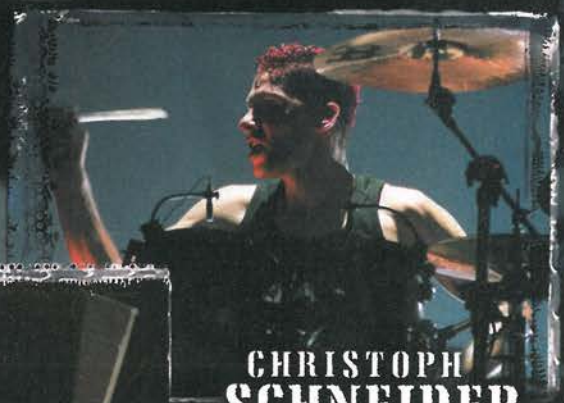

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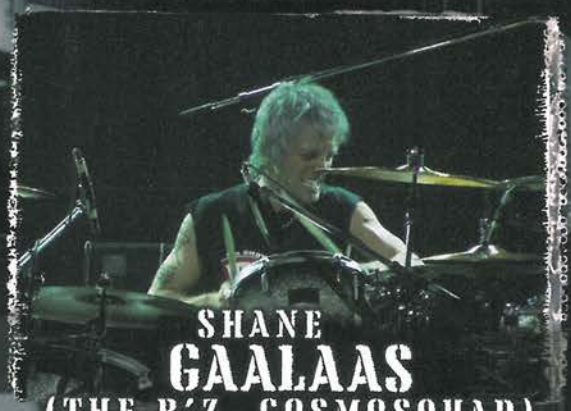

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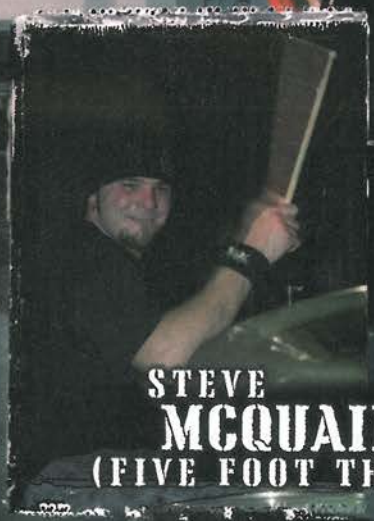

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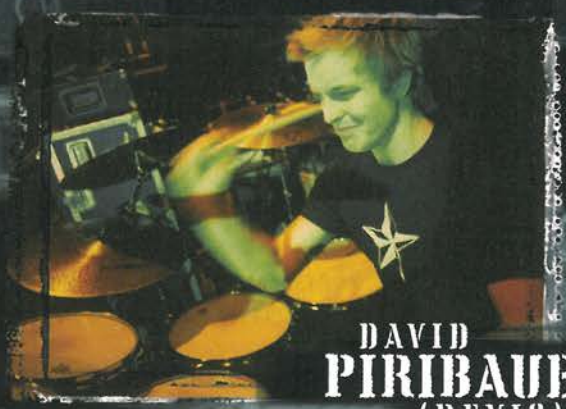

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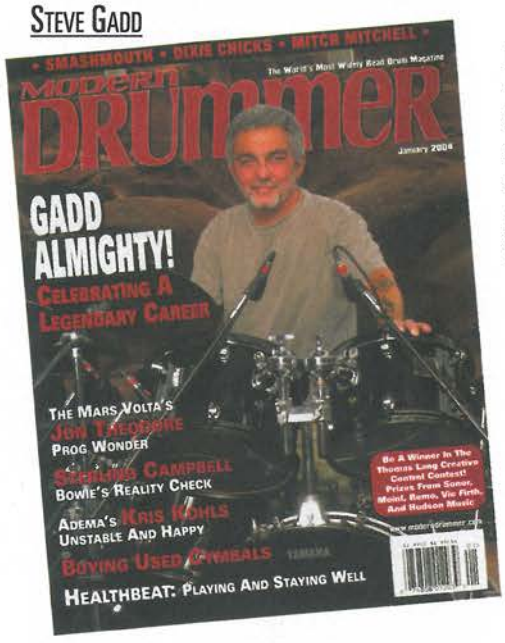

Thank you so much for John Riley's insightful interview with Steve Gadd. To hear a man like Steve, who's been in the business for as long as he has, speak with such enthusiasm and gratitude for what he does is truly inspiring. It is also a reminder that many of the greatest players are also the most humble—an invaluable lesson for those of us with twice the ego and half the talent. **David Ingraham**

Like most of your readers, my list of influences is as long as my arm. But Steve Gadd is at the top. I want to thank him for the decades of inspiration, and I look forward to many more of his musical endeavors.

Most of us know many "Gaddisms," but the thing that keeps us coming back is Steve's feel. I was lucky enough to see him with Eric Clapton in Chicago recently. In a two-hour concert, I could count on one hand the number of times Steve filled longer than one beat, if at all—once again reminding us that less truly *is* more!

The mere mention of Steve's name will put a smile on the faces of those familiar with his playing. If we play a Gadd lick, at least one person in the band is going to turn and smile, as if to say, "I know where you got *that* one." **Bret Zwie**

Back in 1971, I was the hot drummer on campus. One of my buddies from the college big band returned from Christmas vacation and told me that he had seen Steve Gadd while at home in New York, and how phenomenal Steve was. I remember thinking, "Yeah, sure." I was a complete Buddy Rich/Joe Morello addict at the time.

Shortly after that incident, the records started to come, and Steve's playing nailed us all. "50 Ways..." of course. But there were also the early Lee Ritenour records...the Chick Corea material...the group Stuff...Steely Dan...and all the rest. We drummers were then, and have been ever since, blessed by Steve's work. I'd like to extend my personal congratulations to Steve on such a history-making career. **Randy Charles**

Jon Theodore

Thanks for putting Jon Theodore in the January issue. I've been listening to The Mars Volta recently, and I never cease to be amazed at all their talent. When I first heard Jon I instantly fell in love with his playing style: free and structured at the same time.

When I play, I try to get into the mindset that Jon described in his article: just feeling the song and not being worried if there's a chorus coming up. At only sixteen, and playing for only six years, I have a ways to go. But it's something that I strive for. Thanks again for having such an inspirational drummer in your magazine. **Patrick Kline**

It was particularly interesting to read of Jon Theodore's influences: Doug Scharin, Ryan Rapsys, and Mitchell Feldstein. Since my teenage years in suburban Chicago, I've been greatly inspired by this same crop of talent. (Not to be excluded from this elite group is Mike Kinsella of Owls.) Congratulations to Jon Theodore and his contemporaries for receiving the recognition they deserve. They remind us that drumming is still an art form. **Eden Myles**

John Gardner

I'm pleased that Dixie Chicks drummer John Gardner is finally receiving some well-deserved recognition. For many years I had the pleasure of watching him play in Nashville's baddest band, Mike Henderson & The Bluebloods. With the most sonorous cracked cymbals and some of the meanest double shuffling I've ever heard, John and his bandmates rocked the famous Bluebird Cafe on Monday nights. However, it is John's tastefulness and subtlety that I've always admired above all. I'd recommend to anyone that they check out the two Blueblood records to hear it.

When I first saw John play some twelve years ago, I wasn't even old enough to get in the door. But I made it my mission to go each week, in order to figure out how to play the blues. As a result, I can truly say that I ripped off many a lick from John. In addition, John always took time to talk to me and answer questions. Without really knowing how busy he was at the time, I used to ask him for lessons. He always replied with that slow drawl, "Boy, you paid your five bucks." He was more than right. It was the best money I ever spent. **R. Shannon Pollard**

Mitch Mitchell

It's great to see Mitch Mitchell back in the spotlight after being in the shadow of too many other drummers of his era. The songs and explanations listed in your January issue "Top 15" article speak for themselves, and I must agree that those *are* Mitch's finest moments.

When I first saw Jimi Hendrix in 1968, at the age of fourteen, *nobody* was producing music like he was. I was a child of '60s radio and not really into jazz that early in my life, so Jimi's songs were a revelation for me. And Mitch's playing completely broke out of the standard rock drumming that was happening at the time. Thanks so much for putting the spotlight on an individual who had such a serious influence on so many drummers. I know what an influence he was on me. **Paul D'Angelo**

Hey, Rock Star!

Gregg Potter's *First Person* article in the January issue was by far the most entertaining and inspirational article I've ever read in *MD*. I enjoyed it so much that I made my wife read it. She dug it too!

Anyone I know who has been "on top" is depressing to listen to. Some have even told me to give up, saying that even if I made it, it would suck. Hey, all I want to do is rock the house and be able to support my family doing what I love. It's an understatement to say that Gregg's article was a breath of fresh air. I hope to see more from him in *MD* soon. **Kevin Decker**

Simple Gig Tips

I thoroughly enjoyed reading Donn Deniston's "Simple Gig Tips: Making Your Performing Life Easier." I can't tell you how many times I've wished I had some sort of checklist the day of a gig. Well, now I do! I read the article and immediately jotted down all of the items that pertained to me and my setup. Donn's tips are practical, useful, and a "must have" for any gigging drummer.

One item that Donn failed to mention, however, is hearing protection. I can't tell you the number of times I've left my ear-saving plugs sitting comfortably on my bedroom dresser, and had to belly up to the bar to grab a napkin and improvise for my personal health. **Ludwig Zebrauskas**

Playing And Staying Well

I was pleased to read Marion Turner's "Playing and Staying Well" piece in your January *Health & Science* department. I strongly agree that "when symptoms arise, it is imperative to start treatment early." I was diagnosed with Thoracic Outlet Syndrome in 1987—but only after fifteen months of working with my HMO to diagnose my condition.

I was working as a touring club drummer when a number of problems began occurring with my right hand. My hand would turn cold for no reason, and it would go numb when raised—which is not good during a gig. Even the smallest wounds would not heal, eventually becoming infected instead. I was visiting different physicians on a regular basis, to no avail.

Finally, a chest X-ray exposed an extra rib coming off my last neck vertebra. At that moment the physician suspected TOS. An angiogram (dye inserted into the bloodstream to track flow and blockages) revealed that my right forearm was full of blood clots, reducing blood flow to my right hand to approximately 10% of normal.

Later that week I had two major surgeries: one to remove the rib, the other to remove the clots and save the arm from amputation. Luckily, the surgery was successful. I still experience some soreness and numbing that affect my approach to drumming, but that's nothing compared to the alternative.

If you suspect any problems, do not hesitate to see your physician. It could save a lot of grief—and possibly your career. **Kane Furey**

Tony Thompson

I was saddened to read of Tony Thompson's passing in your February *Backbeats*. Tony was a drummer who deeply affected my sense of energy and groove. During my college years I especially got into the brilliant groove recordings that he did, such as Madonna's *Like A Virgin*, and Diana Ross tracks like "Upside Down" and "I'm Coming Out." What a powerhouse of rhythm and ideas!

I hope that Tony's passing will at least inspire drummers who have never listened to him closely to go out and do so. There is so much greatness to be experienced. **Joe Choroszewski**

Building Site

I want to let *MD*'s readers know about an informative Web site called Ghost Note (www.ghostnote.net). It's dedicated to building your own drums and customizing the ones you have. Many noted custom builders are members of the forum and will answer questions for you directly. That's an invaluable resource. **Jeff**

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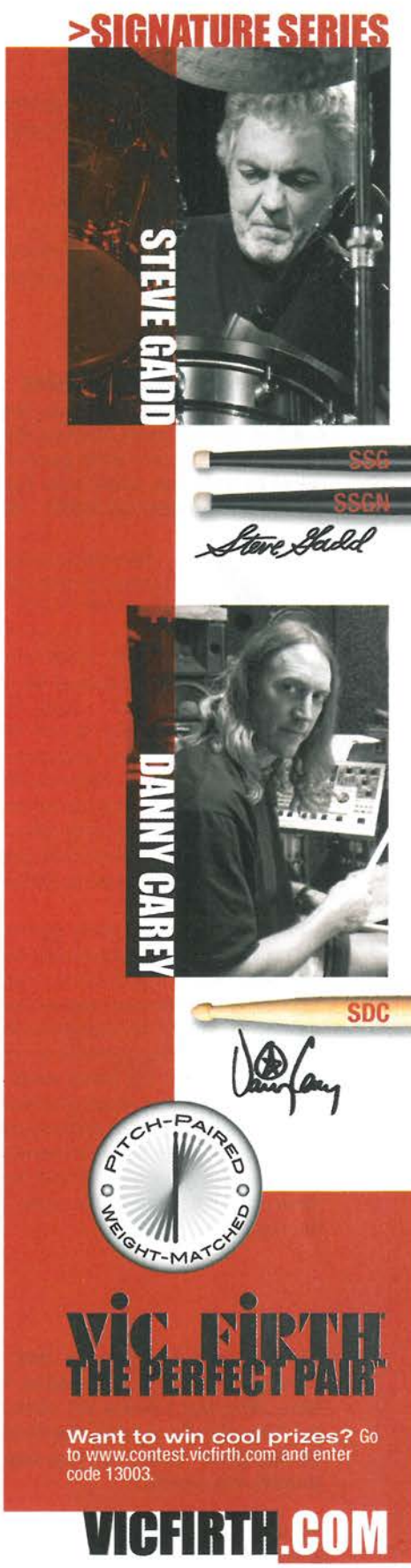


Pro-Mark Aluminum Sticks

I recently came across a set of Pro-Mark aluminum drumsticks that are quite heavy. Do you have any information on these sticks? **Louie**

Pro-Mark's Pat Brown replies, "In the early 1970s—long before other synthetic sticks were on the market—Pro-Mark offered a line of aluminum practice sticks called Duralumin. They came in light, medium, and heavy weights and varied in diameter from about a 7A to a 5A. The line was marginally successful for a few years, but sales ultimately died off to a degree that led us to discontinue the sticks in 1975.

"Duralumin sticks were, and still are, excellent practice tools—well balanced and responsive. But they are *not* meant for playing on a drumset; they are only meant for practice/warm-up use."

Top-Miked Drums

I've been playing for over thirty years, and I've always been curious about something: Why are toms generally miked from the top, while bass drums are miked from inside the shell? **Mike**

Most engineers would prefer to mike drums from the inside, for better isolation and for the ability to capture more of the "full drum" sound. They can do it with bass drums, because drummers tend to cut holes in the front heads to help control the drum's overring—coincidentally allowing access for a microphone. In fact, cutting a hole specifically *for* miking has become an accepted practice.

However, since drummers generally don't cut holes in their bottom tom heads (and single-headed toms aren't in vogue these days), engineers are basically forced to put drum mic's on the outsides of toms and snare drums. They generally put them on top, pointing at the batter heads, in order to gain the most attack. (Sometimes a second mike is placed under a snare drum to help capture the snare sound.) Of course, some drummers *do* put mic's inside double-headed drums, using the May internal-miking system.

Vintage Ludwig Snare

I have an old 5x14 Ludwig snare with ten lugs and triple-flanged hoops. It has a chrome-plated shell that I assume is made of brass, because it's not magnetic. The parallelogram-shaped badge says "Ludwig USA." The top left corner of the badge is cyan blue; the top right corner is olive green. The serial number is 859971. The lugs angle outwards instead of inwards like newer Ludwig lugs do. (The center of the lug is farther from the shell than the ends are.) The shell has a ridge around the middle.

The drum is fitted with an internal muffler with a flat adjustment knob on the outside, 12-strand snares, and Ludwig WeatherMaster heads. Could you please tell me what type of snare this is, when it was made, and what it might be worth? Also, would it be more valuable if I cleaned and polished it and put new heads and snares on it, or if I kept it in its current condition? **Ben Rafferty**

MD drum historian Harry Cangany replies, "Your drum is a Supraphonic dating from the late 1960s to early '70s—and a well-worn one, from the look of it. There's only about a 1% chance that the shell is brass. Only endorsers got brass, and not even all of *them* did. The other 99% of Supraphonic drums featured Ludalloy, an aluminum shell. Chrome does not stick well to aluminum, which is why the plating of these drums tends to pit and bubble.

"The Supraphonic has been called 'the most recorded drum in history.' Thousands were made, and they aren't rare or particularly collectible. So you should feel free to clean your drum up. In improved condition it would be worth $150–200."

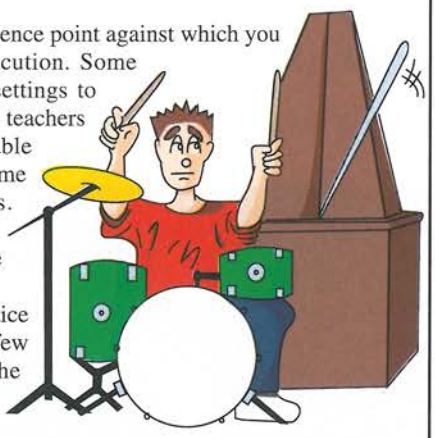
Paiste 13" Ride

I recently acquired a Paiste 2002 13" ride. It's not a misstamped crash or hi-hat cymbal. I've been playing Paistes since 1973, and I own a 16" 2002 ride, but I've never seen anything like this. I know that Paiste makes custom sizes on an individual basis, but how many 13" rides could they possibly have made? **Kelly Simpson**

Paiste's Andrew Shreve responds, "The 2002 13" ride was manufactured until the early 1980s. Many Paiste cymbals were produced in size ranges that would seem odd to most American drummers. This is because many European players are into smaller (or larger) and generally more esoteric cymbals than their American counterparts are. These unique sizes are popular in European free jazz and avant-garde styles. There is a whole world of obscure applications that we are hard-pressed to provide for through 'normal' cymbal production, due mainly to the relatively low demand world-wide. But we never stop trying."

How To Use A Metronome

What is the correct way to practice with a metronome? What BPM should I set it for while practicing rudiments on a pad? Also, what exactly should I be striving to achieve on each click?
Glenn



The idea of using a metronome is to establish a reference point against which you can practice an exercise for even, consistent execution. Some drumming texts will have suggested metronome settings to work with when practicing the exercises. But most teachers suggest starting *any* exercise at a slow, comfortable tempo, and then gradually increasing the metronome setting as your skill on that exercise improves. Remember that speed alone is not the goal; playing smoothly and cleanly at *all* tempos is much more desirable.

To help you find a starting point at which to practice any given rudiment, we suggest that you play it a few times by yourself, until you have a feeling for the speed at which you can execute it well. Set the metronome to that speed, and play the rudiment along with it. As you play, make sure that you are in time with the metronome and that the clicks conform to the counting you're doing. (You may want to record your self playing to the metronome. That way you listen back to check your accuracy.) Once you've mastered the rudiment at that tempo, increase the tempo by a few beats per minute. Repeat the process until you can execute the rudiment at virtually any speed.

Readers with questions for this department may submit them to It's Questionable, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009, or via email to rvh@moderndrummer.com. Please include your full name with your question.

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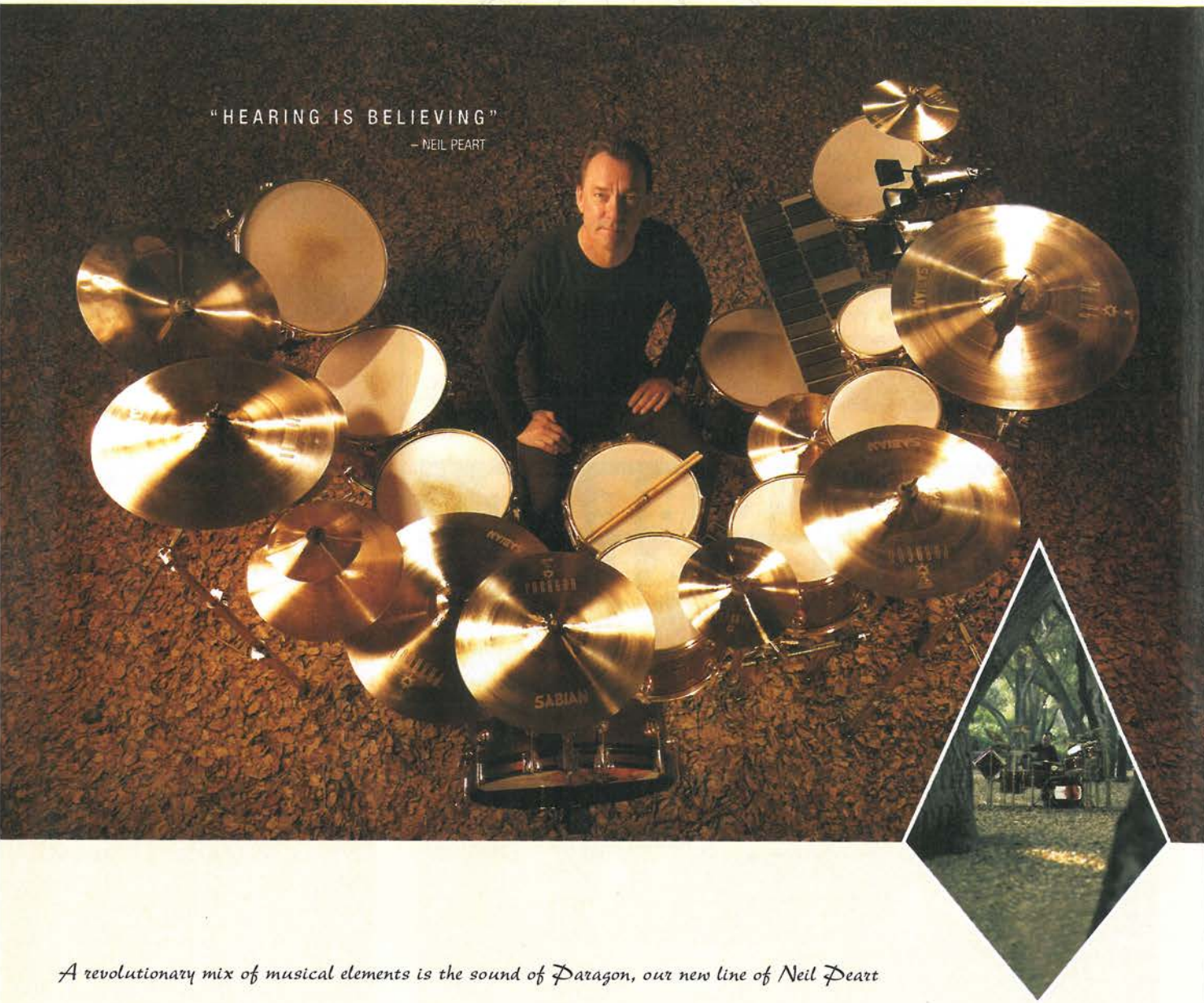

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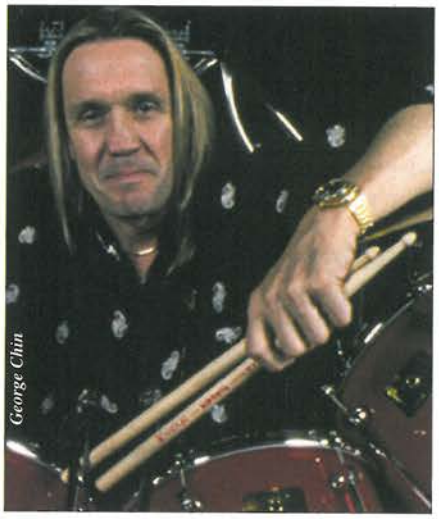
Chad Smith On Snare-Head Selection

Q I recently bought a 3x14 Pearl Free-Floating piccolo snare, which is amazing. But as I've been using it, the heads I've tried seem to have lost their "crack" and response fairly quickly. Some have even pulled apart, even though I don't have them tensioned all that tightly. Can you recommend a head that's slightly more durable and will help promote the sound of the drum?

Mike

A I used one of those drums when I first started with The Peppers, and I agree that they're great. At that time I used the same snare head I still use today: Remo's coated CS "Black Dot" model. It keeps a lot of the crack, and it sounds good when you really crank it up. Thanks for asking, and keep on spankin' those skins!

Dancing With Nicko McBrain



Q Your drumming on Maiden's recent *Dance Of Death* album is fantastic. You've always been a single-pedal player with blazing speed. But the kick pattern on "Face In The Sand" is *crazy* fast. Is that by any chance a double pedal? Also, "New Frontier" lists your first songwriting credit after twenty years with Maiden. Did you write the lyrics and the music?

Tom Bittner

A Thanks for your questions. It's a very special feeling to have my first writing contribution on the new album. I wrote the melodies and words originally. Bruce [Dickinson, vocalist] changed the words in the verses, but we kept the bridge and chorus. Adrian [Smith, guitarist] helped with music on the chorus and bridge. We had a great collaboration.

As for "Face In The Sand," it does have a DW 5000 Turbo twin pedal on it. I had to learn to use one over the couple of weeks just prior to recording the track. That was fun, I can tell you! To be honest, though, I don't think I'll be using it again. That's no reflection on the pedal; I just don't think double pedal playing is for me.

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Mark Zonder's Tips For Creative Playing

Q I've been a big fan of your precise, intense playing since I first heard Fates Warning's *Parallels*. With that in mind, I have several questions:

1. Who were your influences while you were learning to play, and what did you work on to develop your style?
2. How do you approach a song when it is first presented to you?
3. How do you get your ideas for your creative and well-executed fills?
4. Can you offer any advice to help me increase the precision of my own playing?

Matt Kravitz

Alex Solca

A Thanks for your compliments, Matt. To answer your questions in order:

1. When I started to play, my teacher had me playing to Beatles songs, charted out. The twist was that it was the Aretha Franklin versions. We'd go through tunes like "Eleanor Rigby" and "Let It Be" on the *Aretha Live* album. Then we'd study Creedence Clearwater Revival songs for the rock side of things. Later, one of my biggest influences was Aynsley Dunbar, on the first three Journey albums. I stole *many* ideas from Aynsley, including keeping time with the left foot on the hi-hat, either on the downbeat or the offbeat. I also gained a lot of ideas from other kinds of music, including Latin, soul, and funk. In particular, I was—and still am—a big Tower Of Power/David Garibaldi fan.

2. I like to play around with a whole variety of approaches. I'm constantly trying to create something new and different, avoiding the obvious choice. However, sometimes the obvious, simple part is the way to go. I look at all of the possibilities: Do I play the kit? Maybe some electronics? Do I try for creative drum sounds with big reverbs or delays? The drumset—along with all the other percussion instruments—offers a wide variety of expression and musicality. I try to use as much of that variety as possible so as not to limit my creativity. Most of this is based on my gut feelings and how the part moves me.

Dynamics play a big part as well. And I don't mean just hitting a 12" crash instead of a 19". The relationship of the various parts is very important. For example, if the verse is very busy and complicated, should I play a simple, wide-open chorus? Everything has to do with the flow of the song and the mood that it will create.

When I start to work on a part, I listen to it several times—first to get the basic feel of the piece, then to see if there's something going on that I can lock on to. In the past I used to try to shove the latest riff I was working on into the music. Sometimes that worked, but most times it didn't. So over the past few years I've really tried to "hear" the music and play to that. Once you have a good idea of what the music is, you can play almost anything you want around it.

I'm not the kind of drummer who can just come up with the final part off the top of my head. I need to play it a bunch of times, adding and subtracting things. And I *always* record what I play. It's the only true way to evaluate what I've done. That way, I'm able to listen objectively and say, "That drum part just doesn't go with the music. Maybe I should leave a hole on beat three so the guitar line stands out." Fortunately, you can purchase very inexpensive digital recorders these days in order to do this.

3. I think the creative part comes from using all of the drumset and not sticking to the traditional approach on things. Additionally, I spent a lot of time studying *Future Sounds* by David Garibaldi and *Afro-Cuban Rhythms For The Drum Set* by Frank Malabe and Bob Weiner. I'll never play like those guys, but I can learn concepts and steal ideas from them—like different stickings and the role of various drums in these styles of music. It's very different from what goes on in a rock setting, but it's a bag of tricks that I can go to. Once you start this kind of thing, it really grows, and you start developing your own style.

As far as the "well-executed" part goes, I play to a click much of the time. It really helps as a guide. You also should know how to read music and have an understanding of the mathematics behind it. This is very helpful when coming up with off-the-wall stuff. You should always know where you are in the music. The "feel" approach never worked for me, because my mind was always ten steps ahead in the part.

4. To aid you in gaining precision, let me reiterate two points: First, a click track is very important. And no, it doesn't make you too rigid. Use it as a guide. There will always be some pushing and pulling to your playing; that's the human side of it. Second, record yourself as much as possible. It was by doing this that I learned that I have a tendency to rush things, which led me to adjust my playing to compensate for that tendency.

Repeat Bar A Classic Quote From MD's Past

Alex Solca

"When we practice, we use our brain—we think. But once we get on stage, we should just feel."

Japanese drum star **Akira Jimbo**, June 2000

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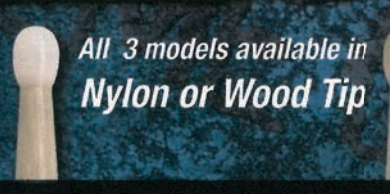

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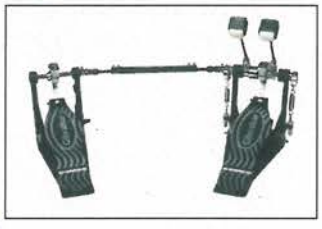

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Mike Terrana

All The Rage In Europe

Norbert Saeman

American-born drummer Mike Terrana relocated to Europe several years ago when he realized the potential for work was much greater there than in the US. "I enjoy living in Europe very much," Terrana says. "The mentality of the European people towards music is different from that of the people in the US, and I find it a refreshing change. It also allows me the luxury of getting more work, because the European people seem to appreciate my drumming style far more than the current audience in America."

Terrana's drumming style is, in a word, "intimidating." He dominates the stage with an eye-catching look and a powerhouse playing style. His muscular anatomy and Mohawk haircut, along with his stick-twirling showmanship, draw you to the drumkit. But beneath the visual showmanship, the drummer possesses an advanced level of technique that can easily move from a finely executed orchestral snare pattern, to an over-the-top Latin fusion groove, to a blistering double bass beat.

How does Terrana stay in such top physical shape and develop such outstanding chops? "When I'm off the road," Terrana explains, "I combine my practice time with weight training or running, which I alternate every other day. I practice approximately six to seven hours a day, a minimum of five days per week. I spend my time working on creating independence in rock and jazz styles, inventing new double bass grooves and fills, building the endurance and speed of my hands and feet, and coming up with new solo ideas."

Terrana is currently enjoying a successful career with longtime German metal band Rage, which the drummer has recorded three albums with. He's also playing with German guitarist Axel Pell, along with a variety of other European artists that range from metal and instrumental fusion to pop. Mike can be heard on a new fusion project, Taboo Voodoo, with French guitarist Cyril Achard. And he's formed a three-piece melodic rock band called Zillion, based out of Hamburg, Germany. You can check out all of Mike's projects at www.terrana.com.

Mike Haid

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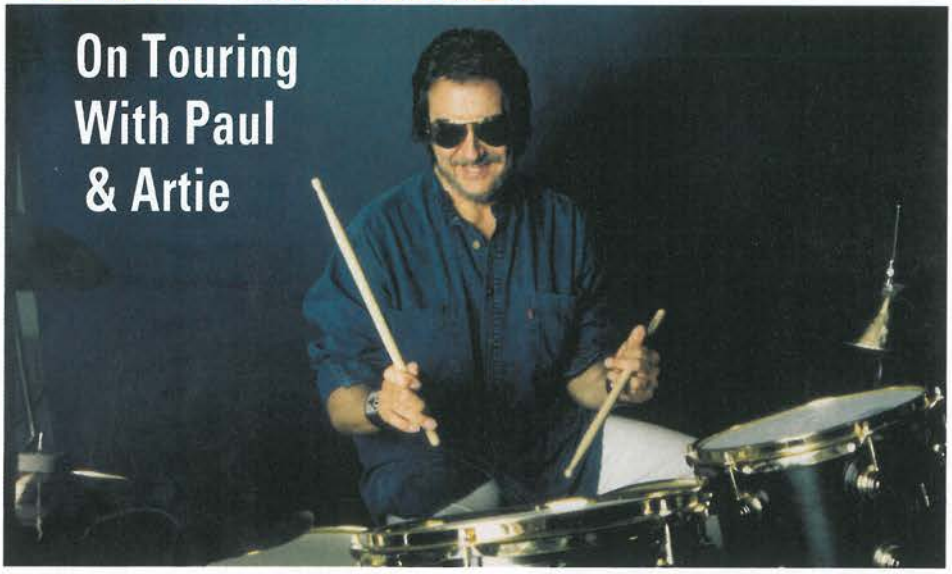
Jim Keltner

On Touring With Paul & Artie



Last year, after performing at the *Academy Awards* show with Paul Simon on his song from *The Wild Thornberrys Movie* (when Steve Gadd couldn't make it), it seemed only right that Jim Keltner should accept the invitation to play the Simon & Garfunkel reunion tour when Gadd had other commitments. Keltner's desire to be a part of this historic reunion was just one reason to do the tour. His love and admiration for Hal Blaine, who did most of their original recordings, was the other.

"Their music was tied to my personal life," Jim explains. "I remember when they were recording 'The Boxer' at Oceanway, which was called Western Studio 3 back then. In those days I would walk around in the hallways. On one particular day they weren't there, but their gear was set up. I opened the door to Studio 3 and sat behind Hal's drums. There was a deli box left there with a piece of crust from a corned beef sandwich and half a pickle, and the ashtray had a mound of cigarette butts. There were also chocolate bar wrappers on the floor. Right away I thought, 'Okay, he eats deli, he smokes a ton of cigarettes, and he's a chocolate freak.' And then I looked down at the floor tom, and there were all these dollar amounts written on the head. At the bottom, they were totaled up.

"When I asked Hal about it much later," Jim says, laughing, he said, 'I would go to the Union before the session and then add up my checks on the floor tom.'"

Keltner says it was important to him to honor the original Simon & Garfunkel parts. "I asked Paul Simon specifically if we could do that. He said, 'I want to, to a certain degree, but I don't want to copy the record verbatim.' For me, I'm trying to copy all of Hal's parts. In fact, I wrote out the main fills of his versions of 'America' and 'The Only Living Boy In New York' because I wanted to make sure I played them exactly right." Jim also mentioned that he particularly enjoys playing "At The Zoo" and "Baby Driver." "I love playing those songs because the groove on both is an old-school shuffle. Paul and Artie both know that school so well. I have great respect for *their* respect for the grooves.

"The music is so great to play," Keltner says of the gig. "At one point during rehearsals, we did 'The Sound Of Silence,' and I cried when they got to that line, 'Words of the prophets written on the subway walls.' I got chills running down my arms, and I lost it. And I thought, 'Wow, if this happens to me in this little empty rehearsal hall, what's it going to do to 20,000 people out in the audience whose lives are all connected to these songs?'"

Robyn Flans

Poncho Sanchez

Conga Soul Madness

On his twenty-fifth album, Grammy winner Poncho Sanchez mixes his love of '60s soul music with his perennial Afro-Cuban approach. *Out Of Sight!* finds the fifty-one-year-old conga terror and bandleader reveling in a self-described "album of funky cha chas."

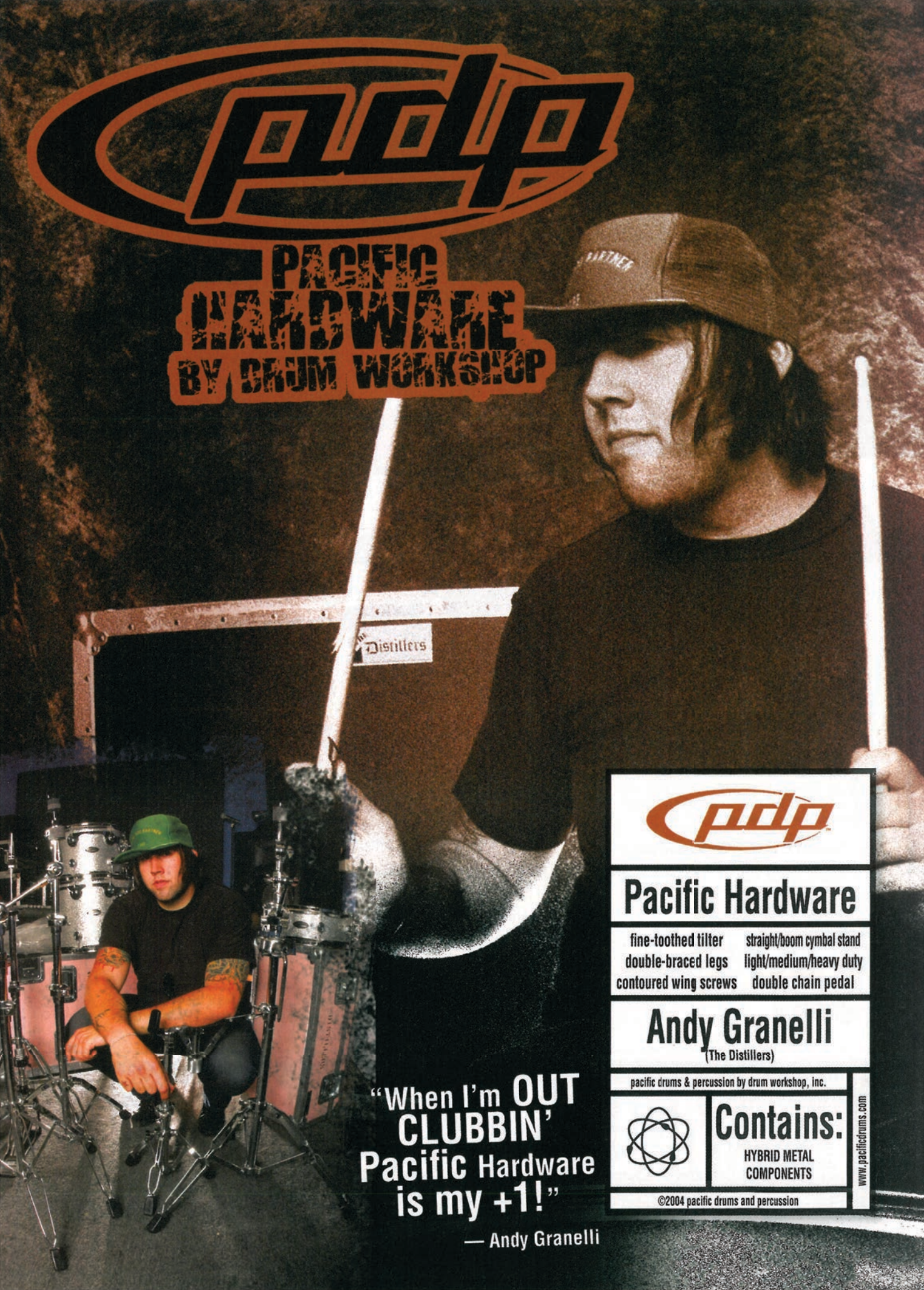
"The cha cha cha really does it on 'Out Of Sight!,'" Sanchez insists from his home in Whittier, California. "I put the timbales, guiro, conga, and bongo on there to change the original groove a little, and it lends itself to that."

Besides the James Brown classic, the CD also features hot sauce–infused renditions of "One Mint Julep," Eddie Palmieri's "Conmigo," and Ray Charles' "Mary Ann," as well as Sanchez originals. Crossing styles and sounds is a natural evolution for the percussion great. "I've always liked the authentic Afro-Cuban music of the '50s, '60s, and '70s, as well as everything from Sam & Dave and James Brown to Otis Redding. I grew up in a large family and I heard a *lot* of music.

"My sister used to dance to the pachanga," Sanchez continues. "It sounds like, 'Bok-cha-bok-choom, bok-cha-bok-choom.' It's almost a galloping sound, and it came from the mambo. Machito and many other Latin bands played it. My sister would dance to that and the mambo, cha cha cha, and merengue, and as a little boy I would try to dance along. At the same time, my brothers would be washing their cars while listening to jazz radio, and the guy across the street had a rhythm & blues band that I would watch rehearse. I heard a lot of burning music."

How did Sanchez mix these ingredients into his soul-fired Latin stew? "The feel and the approach is different for each song," he explains. "I mix the soul influence with the mambo or the cha cha cha. That's what I do. I listen to the old tunes that I like and add grooves to see if they'll work rhythmically. Who would ever think that 'Out Of Sight!' would work as a cha cha cha? But it does."

Ken Micallef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Blues Traveler's

Brendan Hill Capturing The Energy

Blues Traveler's thirteen-year career includes founding the H.O.R.D.E. festival, having one of the longest charting singles ever ("Run-Around"), winning a Grammy, selling over ten million albums, and surviving a founding member's death. The seasoned band's latest studio release, *Truth Be Told*, finds them forging ahead with their signature song-oriented, blues-jam rock. *Truth Be Told* sounds like vintage Blues Traveler, complete with fiery harmonica, powerful solos, and vocalist John Popper's self-revelatory lyrics.

After eight albums, the sessions for *Truth Be Told* marked drummer Brendan Hill's first experience *ever* recording with a click track. "Don Gehman, our producer, was pretty adamant about using a click," Hill laughs, noting that beyond his initial hesitation, using the click made the studio process much simpler. "Aside from that, we did much less pre-production on this record. We worked on writing songs in the studio, rather than knowing exactly what we were going to do before we went in. We'd play a track and listen back to it, and if we liked it we'd move on to the next piece. That way it didn't feel like we were playing something we'd worked on *forever*. We captured a lot of spontaneous creative energy that way."

Hill is proud of his performance on *Truth Be Told*, but admits the album isn't necessarily the best forum for showing off his chops. "A Blues Traveler live show is where you'll see us jumping through hoops," he says. (Check out the band's brand-new concert DVD, *Thinnest Of Air*, for a taste of Hill's stage chops.)

The drummer also loves the onstage interaction shared with bassist Tad Kinchla. "In 'All Hands On Deck,' Tad and I have a couple of bass and drum solo parts. Every four or five times we do that song, we write a new outro, approaching it as if we were in music school and had to arrange some kind of interesting piece to present to the class. We look forward to the moments that we're performing a part we created just an hour before. A lot of bands don't get to do that, but in Blues Traveler, we have lots of opportunities to create different parts."

Gail Worley

NEWS

Mark Herndon is on Alabama's farewell tour.

Brian Geiger is on Crossfade's self-titled Columbia debut.

Bobby Previte and **Andy Roth** are on drums and **Tucker Martine** is on drums and percussion on the new Wayne Horvitz and Tucker Martine release, *Mylab*.

Matt Byrne is on Hatebreed's *The Rise Of Brutality*. He's also touring with the group.

Roger Carter is on a CD by The Squirts (available through Mattbissonette.com). He's also on Rick Springfield's latest release, *Shock, Anger, Denial, Acceptance*.

Clayton Cameron and **Sammy Merendino** are on drums and **Sheila E** is on percussion on Cyndi Lauper's *At Last*.

Danny Craig is on the road with Default supporting their recent CD, *Elocation*.

Jerry Marotta and **Ashwin Sood** are on Sarah McLachlan's *Afterglow*.

Ed Graham is on the self-titled debut by The Darkness.

Laurie Jenkins plays drums and percussion on Howie Day's latest CD, *Stop All The World Now*. **Mark Heaney** is on four tracks as well.

Scot Coogan is on the debut CD by Brides Of Destruction, *Here Comes The Brides*, which features Nikki Sixx and Tracii Guns. Adema drummer **Kris Kohls** plays on the CD as well.

Paul E. Allen is on the road with *American Idol* winner Kelly Clarkson.

Camille Gainer was part of the Steve Madden/VH1 *Rock & Sole* tour with neo-soul artist Yewande. Camille is also on Lou Watson's new CD, *It Doesn't Matter*, and she's just finished touring Europe with former Kool & The Gang lead singer J.T. Taylor.

Virgil Donati is on the new Steve Vai DVD, *Live At Astoria London*.

Jeff Potter is on The Lost Trailer's major-label debut, *Welcome To The Woods*.

Alex Kirst and **Steve Jocz** are on Iggy Pop's *Skull Ring*.

Mike Portnoy is on Dream Theater's *Train Of Thought*.

Steve French has been doing dates with Billy Ray Cyrus.

Alan White will hit the road this spring for a nationwide US arena tour with Yes. The group is celebrating their thirty-fifth anniversary with the stateside release of *Ultimate Yes*, a two-CD set of hits and essentials plus a newly recorded bonus CD.

Sawyer Brown drummer **Joe Smyth**'s junior fife & drum corps, The Preemptors, recently gave their first public performance at a Sons Of The American Revolution grave marker dedication in Franklin, Tennessee.

Billy Cobham has just released a new DVD with Angelo Kelly titled *Call And Response*. (For more info, visit www.billycobham.com.)

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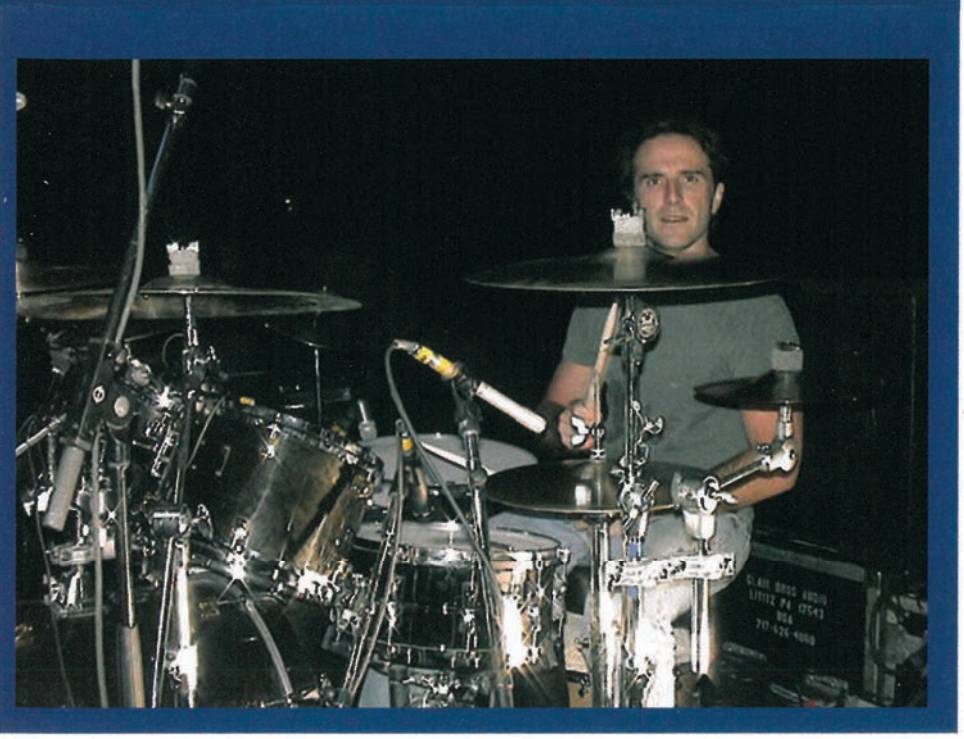

THE DISTILLERS' Andy Granelli
Curve Balls And Clinics

Punk-rock revivalists The Distillers have hit on a musical formula that could spell big success for their much buzzed-about major-label debut. *Coral Fang* infuses the old-school passion and lyrical relevance of hardcore punk legends like LA's Germs and Black Flag with melodic, radio-friendly pop appeal.

As a teenager, twenty-four-year-old drummer Andy Granelli admits being most inspired by local drummers he'd see at Berkeley's famous punk rock venue, Gilman Street. "These were just local guys who were doing interesting things," Andy says. "It was a cool hang. Adam Carson from AFI is one drummer from that scene I really liked."

Edward Vegas McGinty

Recording *Coral Fang*, which mixes high-speed punk with some slower songs, threw Granelli a bit of a curve ball. According to the drummer, "From touring for almost two years straight, I got locked into playing one way, so I had writer's block. I felt stuck in a rut. But once I figured out my parts, the recording came together fast. Of course, a month *after* we finished the recording, I came up with all of these great ideas!"

Granelli recently participated in the DW-sponsored Drum Day 2003 held in Anaheim, California. "That was awesome," the drummer says, "even though I was only on stage for two songs." Andy was excited to share the bill with veteran punk drummers like Charlie Quintana (Social Distortion, The Plugz) and DH Peligro of Dead Kennedys, along with extreme drummer Marco Minnemann and jazz/funk whiz kid Tony Royster Jr. "He's totally killer," says Granelli of Royster's serious chops. "I appreciate and respect how talented he is."

With a contagious enthusiasm for his instrument, Andy admits he could just sit and practice drums by himself for hours. "Drumming is my favorite thing to do, and I feel lucky that it's how I pay the rent." **Gail Worley**

DRUM DATES
This month's important events in drumming history

Lionel Hampton was born on 4/12/09.

Tito Puente was born on 4/20/23.

Bobby Rosengarden was born on 4/23/24.

Modern Drummer editor/publisher **Ronald Spagnardi** was born on 4/25/43.

Average White Band's **Robbie McIntosh** was born on 4/25/50.

Jeff Porcaro was born on 4/1/54.

Buddy Rich passed away on 4/2/87.

Teacher **Frank Malabe** passed away on 4/21/94.

Cozy Powell was killed in a car crash on 4/5/98.

Carlos Vega passed away on 4/7/98.

Nazareth drummer **Darrell Sweet** passed away on 4/30/99.

Claudio Slon passed away on 4/16/02.

On 4/28/67, Gary Lewis & The Playboys were awarded their first and only gold record for "This Diamond Ring." Although Gary appeared on TV playing drums, it was session great **Hal Blaine** on the recording. (**Jim Keltner** was the touring drummer with the group for a short period.)

In April of 1968, **John Bonham** and **Clem Clatini** (along with Jimmy Page and John Paul Jones) record Donovan's "Hurdy Gurdy Man."

On 4/11/70, **Carl Palmer** joins with Keith Emerson and Greg Lake to form the super-trio ELP.

Happy Birthday!

Joe Porcaro (educator): 4/29/30
Jim Keltner (studio great): 4/27/42
Clyde Stubblefield (James Brown): 4/18/43
Steve Gadd (studio giant): 4/9/45
Doug "Cosmo" Clifford (Creedence Clearwater Revival): 4/24/45
Bill Kreutzmann (Grateful Dead): 4/7/46
Steve Ferrone (Tom Petty): 4/25/50
Max Weinberg (Bruce Springsteen): 4/13/51
Bruce Gary (The Knack): 4/7/52
Narada Michael Walden (session great): 4/23/52
Denny Fongheiser (sessions): 4/21/59
Chris Mars (The Replacements): 4/26/61
Patty Schemel (Hole): 4/24/67
Stan Frazier (Sugar Ray): 4/23/68
Aaron Comess (Spin Doctors): 4/24/68
Greg Eklund (Everclear): 4/18/70

Premier Series Drums

The British Are Coming...Again!

HITS

maple and Gen-X shells each offer distinctive sonic characteristics

excellent construction quality

unparalleled chrome plating

by Chap Ostrander

Premier has drawn upon their eight decades of drum building to create a completely redesigned line of high-end drumkits, which they have designated simply as the Premier Series. Premier's goal was to offer drummers a choice of handcrafted drums with the warmth of maple, the clarity of birch, or a combination of both in one shell. Also offered is the option of reinforcing rings within the all-maple and all-birch kits. British studio and touring ace Steve White was the driving force behind the development of the new series. All of the drums are built at the Premier factory in England.

We were sent two of the three wood types to try: the maple and the Gen-X maple/birch combination.

Drum Details

While the Premier Series is offered in three wood types, there are some features common to all of them. For example, the shells are undersized by 3 mm—meaning that the diameter of a 14" shell (for example) is actually 3 mm less than 14". Premier believes that this sizing enhances the sensitivity and tone of the drumhead—and thus the overall drum sound—when combined with the precision of their bearing edge. The drums come with identity plates next to their pewter logo badges, signifying the wood type and year of construction.

Premier Series Maple

Premier Series Gen-X

All tension rods have two washers, which stay with the rod. The inner one is flat and the outer one is a lock washer. The swivel nuts in the lugs have nylon inserts that keep the tension rods from detuning.

The die-cast bass drum claw hooks have rubber liners that hold the hoop securely. The liner extends inside the claw to retain the tension rod. The bass drum spurs fold back against the shell for packing, and they feature convertible rubber feet/spikes.

The lugs, floor-tom leg brackets, and tom mounts are set off the shells with nylon gaskets. The tom mounting system is based on Premier's classic ISO mount, but allows greater variations in set-ups by way of a newly engineered tom bracket with hide-away memory lock. The look of these memory locks is the nicest of any I've seen. They don't look like tubing clamps that were chrome plated and stuck on the legs and tom mounts. Instead, they're rounded, and they complete the shape of the mounts.

My first impression of the lug design was that it was rather simplistic. But it really lets you focus on the drums and the overall look of the kit. The lugs are each mounted onto the shell with two screws, which I have always felt relieves stress on the shell.

Premier's Diamond Chrome process has been legendary for decades. It involves numerous operations and culminates with hand polishing, resulting in a gleaming chrome finish that's unrivaled in the industry.

Maple Drums

Our maple review kit came with what Premier calls "unsupported" shells, meaning that they did not have reinforcing rings. The kit was finished in White Marine Vintage wrap, giving it a classic look.

The bass drum came fitted with PowerStroke 3 batter and front heads, which helped it to produce a solid and powerful sound that was round and full. That fullness seemed to expand, almost like a volcano of sound. The rack and floor toms had individual voices that spoke well between each other. They too were powerful drums, with tons of warmth.

I found the maple toms and bass drum most fulfilling to play, because the low end of the tone continued to develop after the initial strike. I heard the impact and was then further rewarded by the wave of mid-range and lows booming in, creating a sort of surround effect.

Gen-X Drums

The review set with Gen-X shells was finished in Light Gold Sparkle lacquer, and was simply stunning. The Gen-X drums had the same basic qualities as their maple siblings, with the exception of their response. The Gen-X shell is made up of four "inside" plies of maple with two outer plies of birch. This combination gives you aspects of both wood types at once.

Finnish Birch is known for its clarity, and this certainly held true with the drums I tested. Even though the Gen-X shells had only two plies of birch, they produced a distinctly brighter sound than did the drums made of maple alone. The drums spoke immediately and in full voice. The bass and toms felt more contained than those on the maple kit, due to the punch that they delivered.

The amount of sustain from both kits was comparable, but the maple drums took time to fill out, while the Gen-X models produced a more distinct tone up front (while still possessing some of the warmth of the maple). I'm sure that an all-birch shell would be brighter still.

All of the drums were extremely easy to tune, and their individual voices seemed to flow into each other as I moved between them.

Modern Classic Snares

The snares supplied with each kit were from Premier's standalone Modern Classic series, in wood types and finishes to match

the kits. They featured Premier's precision bearing edges, tube lugs, 2.3-mm steel hoops, Nickel Drumworks strainer and butt plate, and Everplay (by Remo) coated batter and hazy snare-side drumheads.

The maple Modern Classic snare that came with the maple Premier Series kit was a 5½x14 with loads of warmth and response. It was a joy to play with brushes, sticks, or rods, and it had a voice that was equally impressive from a whisper to a roar.

The Gen-X kit was supplied with a 6x10 all-birch auxiliary snare and a 7x13 primary drum with the Gen-X hybrid shell. The piercing sound of the 10" snare fit right in with the very direct sound of the Gen-X kit, making it an excellent addition. The 7" snare possessed tons of power, and had to be kept under control at all times. It had the same sensitivity of the other snares, with no apparent limit to its dynamic range. I sent it out on a concert gig with my wife, and while at first the other percussionists in the orchestra thought it "merely a drumset snare" (and therefore unworthy), they soon changed their tune when they played it. I got nothing but raves about the drum.

My personal impression was, if the 7x13 drum has this much sound, you'd probably need a permit to own one in a 14" diameter.

6000 Series Hardware

Both review kits came with Premier's 6000 series hardware, which is quite stylish. As on the tom mounts, the memory locks on the various stands mate with the lower sections and complement the look of the connection. With the exception of the small lock on the arm of the disappearing boom, the memory locks all have nylon sleeves to ensure a solid hold. The legs on all the stands are double-braced, and the feet are made of a soft rubber that provides secure traction. Even the wing screws on the stands have a finish that makes them easy to grip.

The 6073 single bass drum pedal is fully adjustable, with a double chain on a felt-lined track. The bottom plate can fold for packing, but locks on with drumkey screws to be very solid when assembled. An L-shaped key, plus a set of allen wrenches, are mounted on the footboard. You need the key to lock the pedal onto the bass-drum hoop. The size and location of the clamp didn't allow me to apply the key until the pedal was clamped to the drum, but I could easily turn it by hand until the key was needed. The spring tension adjustment locks securely above and below. There are spurs on the footboard and hook-and-loop strips underneath. The pedal comes with a two-sided felt/plastic beater.

The 6015 hi-hat stand features a folding footboard like the bass pedal, with spurs and hook-and-loop strips for security. The legs can be rotated for convenient double-pedal placement, and the multi-level spring adjustment gives you good choices for the tension under your foot. I never felt the pedal "bottom out" while playing, thanks to a cushioned stop built into the rod. The pedal felt solid, smooth, and silent.

The 6013 snare stand utilizes a nylon ball for limitless angle adjustments. It also has a removable basket for easier pack-up (plus you keep your angle adjustment). The hexagonal connection has a flat spot in the middle so that the stand doesn't disengage suddenly if the drumkey screws become loose. (Very thoughtful.) The rubber grips on the basket arms have ribs to minimize contact with the drum.

The 6014 cymbal stand is a solid unit with a base that can be set up in a tight spread for easy placement in close proximity with other hardware, or in a wide spread for greater stability. The 6016 boom stand is convertible with a disappearing arm.

Got You Covered

Another thoughtful feature from Premier is that the Premier Series drums will be shipped in soft-sided bags as further protection during shipping. These bags feature an outer lining of 1200-denier polyester with 20-mm foam and 450 polyester inside, plus heavy-duty lockable zippers and swivel fasteners on the straps.

Final Thoughts

Premier has done some amazing work in producing these drums. Drummers can choose the shell type that they want, including mixing them up for a truly custom kit. Twenty-nine finishes are available, including wraps, classic lacquers and satins, and high-gloss sparkles. The Premier brand has been relatively dormant at the high end for the past several years, but the introduction of the Premier Series testifies to their being back with serious intent.

THE NUMBERS

Premier Series Maple Model Classic (unsupported shell)

9x13 Rack Tom	$ 749
14x14 Floor Tom	$ 811
16x16 Floor Tom	$ 840
16x22 Bass Drum	$1,231
5½x14 Modern Classic Snare Drum	$ 599

Premier Series Gen-X (Maple/Birch Hybrid) Model

7x8 Quick Tom	$ 743
8x10 Quick Tom	$ 761
9x12 Quick Tom	$ 796
10x13 Quick Tom	$ 803
11x14 Quick Tom	$ 868
16x16 Floor Tom	$ 901
16x18 Floor Tom	$ 971
18x22 Bass Drum	$1,366
6x10 Modern Classic (All-Birch) Auxiliary Snare Drum	$ 539
7x13 Modern Classic Snare Drum	$ 579

6000 Series Hardware Package ..... $ 770
(includes bass drum pedal, snare stand, hi-hat stand, cymbal stand, and cymbal boom)

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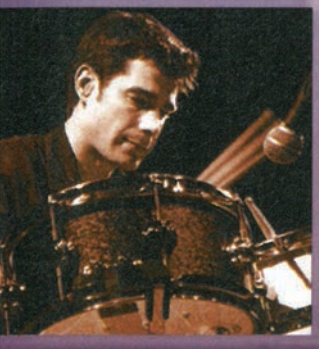

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New Zildjian K Constantinople Rides

Hitting The "Old K" Bull's-Eye

HITS

superior re-creation of "old K" sound and feel

multiple playing areas and sweet spots

cymbals respond effectively to "push crash" with shank of stick

by T. Bruce Wittet

20" Thin High

22" Medium-Thin High

22" Thin High

In this review, we're going to examine six new K Constantinople ride cymbals recently released by Zildjian. You've probably seen them in the company's "Dancing Devils" ad campaign. However, in order to truly appreciate these new cymbals, we have to start with a little history lesson.

K Zildjian cymbals that we see today—with a big "K" etched across them—have been made in America since the mid-1970s. Prior to that time, K Zildjians were made in Istanbul, Turkey. The K Zildjian of that earlier era was an untamed beast of a cymbal, partially due to consistency problems inherent in hand-made cymbals of the day. A 20" cymbal marked "medium ride" might weigh anything from three and a half pounds to almost six.

The Istanbul factory closed down around 1976, and production of K Zildjians was shifted to North America. Since then, many thousands of fine cymbals have been produced. Something, however, kept jazz drummers returning to the old Turkish Ks. These prodigals willingly paid up to $1,600 for a 22" ride—sometimes even one with hairline cracks.

Because it bears on this review, let's count the reasons for loving old Turkish Ks. First, there was the exotic, dark tone that many of the cymbals possessed. Lay the shank of a drumstick against them and they'd utter the guttural "caw" of a crow. Meanwhile, the bead of the stick would produce a click rather than a ping—at least on most of the cymbals. (There were heavier Ks that would ping. I own one that weighs as much as a rear axle.)

Another classic "old K" attribute is that the cymbal's body would shake and wobble, but the sound would never swell to a zingy high pitch. Instead, it would hug the bottom end of the frequency scale. The most coveted of the old Ks were very thin, and would almost "gate" and shut down following a good slap with the shank of a stick.

Zildjian's first K Constantinoples seriously sought to recapture the best characteristics of the old Ks in an American-made cymbal. The hammering was done by machine, but it recreated the deep, sometimes overlapping peen hammer marks of the oldest Ks. Despite such gains, the search for the "true old K" sound continued, spurred on by drummers who grew up on Turkish Ks, new or second-hand.

This brings us to the six new K Constantinoples that are the subject of this review.

They Got It!

I'd like to go on record and say categorically that the search for the "old K" sound has ended with the new K Constantinoples. True, I own a couple of 1950s-era K rides that I prefer—but *only* a couple. The new models are damn close. And so they should be, since they are the fruits of Zildjian's collaboration with real sticklers like jazz greats John Riley and Adam Nussbaum.

Before we continue, I must thank Zildjian (and specifically Paul "The Hammer" Francis) for indulging me. I spent several *months* with these cymbals. I recorded them with a jazz trio and quartet, gigged with them in an organ trio, punished them in a rock band, and even tickled them in a unit consisting of violin, Chapman stick, and drums. I've heard them in the testing room, in soft-seat theaters, in office buildings (jazz at noon for public servants), and in sixty-foot-long hardwood-floored studios. Suffice it to say, they got a *thorough* examination.

Shared Attributes

All six K Constantinoples are dark, exotically toned instruments that feel buttery soft to the touch. When hit quietly, some of them almost sizzle, as if fitted with rivets. When laid into, they open up into a dense swell, free of extreme high frequencies. Each was as good a jazz cymbal as I've ever played. In a shop, I'd have difficulty choosing among them.

Each cymbal meets drummer-driven criteria: They're much thinner than most modern cymbals—you can bend them over your knee. When you ride them with intensity, the edges begin to wobble. Add a little force, and anarchy sets in. Overtones fly (perhaps provoking the "dancing devils" analogy), but remain well controlled. That's not to imply that the new Constantinoples are overly focused or dumbed down. You still need *touch* to play them. Either that, or employ them as mighty crashes—in which case, hit 'em once and get out of the way!

Stand Up And Be Counted

As we examine each cymbal, remember that the subtle weight differences don't make for radically different cymbal sounds as much as they provide you with the means to incrementally dial in your ideal K sound.

22" Medium-Thin Ride High. The "high" in the designation refers to pitch, and from what I could judge, a slightly higher profile. Ostensibly the least radical of the Ks, this one was my least favorite—until I heard Steve Smith play one in a clinic. I could have sworn I was hearing an old *killer* Turkish K. Afterwards I gave Steve's cymbal a play and, sure enough, up close it sounded like my test model. That night I learned a lesson in perception: *Listen from a distance.* Zildjian's Paul Francis, who lathed each of the review models himself, confirmed that he'd received similar feedback from his jazz endorsers.

22" Medium-Thin Ride Low. It's lower than the High, but not drastically so. I preferred this cymbal for its instantly gratifying injection of trashy low timbres. Is it my imagination, or do I detect an ever-so-slight flange hammered into the edge of this cymbal?

22" Thin Ride High. This model introduces more of that cool wobble, yet it retains stick definition. The predominant sound is light and airy, but there's still some smoke brewing in the pit.

20" Medium-Thin Ride High. Although this model was a little too high for me, it still sat well with my definition of a traditional K sound. (Remember that the old Ks were extremely diverse in pitch.) Feel-wise, this cymbal retained a soft touch.

20" Medium-Thin Ride Low. The slight increase of metal in the formula (over the following lighter model) afforded a little extra projection, while the inherent pliability of this cymbal made it a good-feeling ride. The low pitch spoke well in low-volume acoustic settings and in the studio. It crashed; it rode.

20" Thin Ride High. Now we're *really* talking! The 20" size seems to crystallize the essential K attributes, while the reduced weight brought the frequency down. I could ride this baby, shank it, crash it, and generally do just about anything I wanted with it.

Conclusion

I'm a picky cuss, and I purposely haven't raved about previous K Constantinoples—mostly for the very reasons that commend this review's "Magnificent Six." But I have no reason not to recommend these cymbals wholeheartedly. Believe me when I say that the new K Constantinoples have hit the mark.

THE NUMBERS

20" Medium-Thin Ride High	$550
20" Medium-Thin Ride Low	$550
20" Thin Ride High	$550
22" Medium-Thin Ride High	$650
22" Medium-Thin Ride Low	$650
22" Thin Ride High	$650

(781) 871-2200, www.zildjian.com.

Meinl Marathon Classic Series Congas

Boom On A Budget

HITS

versatile tuning range

solid construction

consistent and reliable

by Norman Arnold

Meinl's percussion division offers a wide range of conga drums, from the high-end Artist and Professional series to the affordable Marathon Classic series reviewed here. They're all made in the same factory, according to the same methods and quality-control standards. So the only real difference in price and performance has to do with materials, fixtures, and finishes. In other words, even though our review congas might be "affordably priced," there's absolutely nothing "cut-rate" about them.

Marathon Classic congas feature shells made from 2-ply rubberwood staves. After the staves are glued together, the finished shell is fitted with a soft rubber cap on the bottom. (So you won't scratch the living-room floor at your next Sunday brunch jam session.) All the drums are fitted with select buffalo-skin heads, along with Meinl's SSR rims. Those rims sit quite low on the drums, making them very comfortable to play.

The drums are available in three stained finishes: Supernatural, Vintage Sunburst, and Wine Red. The SSR rims feature a matte black finish. Each drum comes with Meinl's lightweight Steely-II stand (also in matte black), which is easy to assemble and highly portable. The stands feature spike tips as well as rubber feet, providing a good grip on any surface.

The Quinto

When I cranked the head on the 11" quinto pretty tight, the drum still sounded very authentic—not too brittle or cheesy. The buffalo-skin head helps to create a warm sound.

It's easy to get all the requisite strokes on this drum, with slap sounds being particular standouts. When the drum is mounted on the Steely stand, it also has a great low end. Considering its size, the quinto is surprisingly loud. It would be great in any live situation.

The Conga

The 11¾" conga is a very versatile drum. While all the strokes are easy to get on this drum too, low tones are particularly impressive when it's mounted on its stand.

The quinto and the conga sound great together. I tried a few different tunings with these two drums, and always found it easy to get rich and lively sounds that complemented each other.

The Tumba

The bass tone produced by the 12½" tumba when mounted is fantastic. As with the other two drums, this one responded well to all the strokes. It's also a great complement to the quinto and conga. When I added the tumba to the other two, I de-tuned it quite a bit for a *really* low tone. It was great as an accent drum.

Meinl's lugs and SSR rims make it really easy to experiment with tunings and thus create different sounds from the Marathon congas. I did exactly that, and I'm completely satisfied that whatever style you wish to play will be well served by these versatile drums.

The Real World

I took the Marathon congas to a taiko recording session—just in case we wanted to experiment with different sounds. We recorded at O'Henry studios in LA. It's a big "A" room with all the fixin's, so there's nowhere to hide. The recorded sound will be exactly what the real sound is.

I overdubbed the congas after playing the main taiko parts, in order to add another texture to the sound. I played the drums mostly with sticks, as well as with Rutes on the heads and the rims, which created a unique sound. We also did a couple of overdubs playing traditional hand patterns to create some driving rhythms within the taiko parts. It was an interesting session to say the least, and the Marathon congas certainly held up their end of the deal. Through it all they proved very versatile and always sounded great.

Conclusion

After reviewing a lot of Meinl gear over the past several months, I have no reservations taking their drums anywhere, right out of the box. The fact that the Marathon Classics are situated at the lower end of Meinl's price range makes these particular drums an excellent value.

THE NUMBERS

11" Quinto	$300
11¾" Conga	$320
12½" Tumba	$340

(877) 886-3465, www.meinl.de.

Quick Looks

Oz Drumpad

The Oz Drumpad is billed by its Australian manufacturer as "the intelligent practice pad." It's made of natural wood and gum rubber, with the wood frame coming in vibrant candy colors including yellow burst, red burst, green, turquoise, black, and natural.

The playing surface is a gum-rubber disk that's 5" in diameter and ⅛" thick for a "true feel" stick rebound. It also has a fine, micro-textured surface designed to imitate that of a coated drumhead. This provides just the right feel and sensitivity for practicing buzz rolls. It also promotes sticking accuracy, since the stick tip isn't inclined to slide sideways on impact, as can happen with some smooth-surfaced rubber pads.

The portability and "on the fly" convenience of the Oz pad is second to none. Its wooden base is 5½" wide, with a half-moon curved bottom surface that attaches to your knee with an adjustable nylon strap and quick-clasp. This curved surface is equipped with a non-slip rubber webbing to prevent the pad from sliding on your leg. That same webbing extends out to the "legs" of the pad, so that it can be used securely on smooth surfaces like a tabletop. The pad is also fitted with an 8-mm threaded insert, which allows it to be attached to most cymbal stands.

The top portion of the pad (to which the playing surface is attached) is a hexagonal piece of wood that attaches to the lower frame in such a way that it slopes down slightly from one side to the other. This, in turn, allows the playing surface to be angled slightly toward or away from the drummer, similar to the way that most drummers have their snare drums set up.

In a nutshell, this pad is one of the best I've ever used. Rebound and stick control thoroughly mimic that of a real drumhead—only *much* quieter. The pad is also far more attractive than the standard fare. When I took it with me to several gigs, other drummers who saw it immediately wanted to check it out. Suggested list price is $35.

(661) 947-3867, www.ozdrumpad.com.

Russ Barbone

Canopus Club Kit And Aluminum Snare Drum

Pocket-Sized Power

HITS

Club Kit offers extreme portability

Club Kit toms sound bigger than they are

Aluminum snare is articulate, with good projection

MISSES

Club Kit bass drum is too small for the job

by Russ Barbone

Canopus is a small but innovative Japanese drum company headed up by designer/builder Shinichi Usuda. Though they're not a household name in the US, they've been around for quite a while, offering products like the Zelkova snare drum, which can lay claim to being the first-ever production snare drum bored from a single piece of wood. More recently, they've been developing complete drumkits for overseas markets—notably the US.

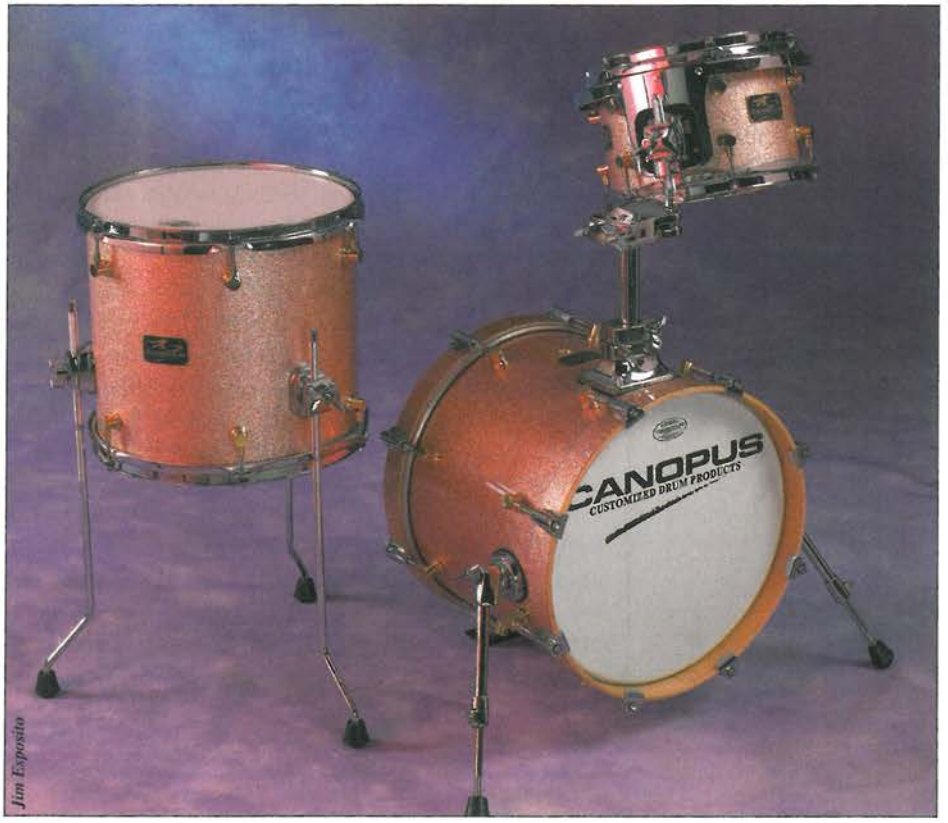
Canopus's manufacturing philosophy is to regard all of the parts used in the construction of a drum as a total package. The size of the shell, the number of plies, the shape and angle of the bearing edge, the choice of lugs, the type of head, and even the collar shapes of the individual heads are all considered in order to get the best resonance possible.

This approach has been applied to our review subjects here: the Club Kit and the Aluminum snare drum. Let's take a closer look at each.

The Club Kit

The Club Kit is an ultra-compact ensemble that includes a 12x15 bass drum, a 7x10 rack tom, and a 12x13 floor tom. The drums feature 5-ply American maple shells, and are available in oiled, stained lacquer, or plastic-wrapped finishes. They're fitted with round, polished-brass lugs that are mounted on the shells at one attachment point. The toms use twelve lugs per drum; the bass drum uses sixteen lugs. Every tension rod features a leather washer/metal washer/leather washer sandwich between the rod head and the drum rim. This reduces the transfer of vibrations from the shell to the tension rods. It also helps the rods hold the chosen tuning over an extended period of time (a nice touch).

It's worthy of note that Canopus uses a nitrocellulose lacquer that's more common on old-world violins than on modern-day drums. As it ages, it's likely to discolor slightly, and may even develop small cracks. However, after much consideration, Canopus deliberately chose this finish for its acoustic characteristics. Like a fine wine, it will age and improve over the years, thus creating the potential for a rare and desirable vintage instrument.



Jim Esposito

As the drum sizes of the Club Kit would indicate, it's aimed at the drummer who does frequent gigs in tight spaces, or who has to travel to jobs via public transportation. Canopus noted that in recent years the trunk space in a typical New York City cab has shrunk to a point where a drumkit with a 20" bass drum simply won't fit. So they downsized the entire set for ease of carrying. As a side benefit, this set would also suit a younger drummer who doesn't have the reach of an adult.

The Club Kit comes with only the hardware necessary to set up the toms and bass drum, but that hardware is sturdy and a breeze to work with. The rack-tom holder uses a captive ball & socket design for infinite positional settings. It also has a memory lock for quick repeated height set-up. The floor tom comes

with three adjustable legs that provide ample height capability, even considering the drum's small size. The bass drum's spurs are robust, with angle and height adjusters, and are tipped by sturdy rubber caps that can be removed to reveal spikes.

Finish And Sound

The set we tested featured a Champagne sparkle covering and gold-finished brass lugs. The combination was quite attractive. Interestingly, Canopus's product literature states that—according to their tests—the color of the wrap affects the sound. Now, I agree with conventional wisdom that says an unwrapped drum tends to resonate better than a wrapped one does. The theory is that the wrap layer and the glue that attaches it tend to dampen the shell. But to claim that the *color* of a wrap affects the sound seems a bit of a stretch to me. I suppose it's possible that wraps of different colors are of different thickness. But these differences would be microscopic, and the sonic nuances would most likely be equally minute—if perceivable at all. So I think the selection of a covered finish could safely be based on the owner's visual preference.

All that being said, the rack and floor toms on our wrapped review kit were very resonant, with a maple warmth that I enjoyed. They projected a deceptively big sound compared to their actual sizes. It took some time to become accustomed to the fact that I was not actually playing a much bigger kit. I tend to think this set would best be matched with a snare no deeper than 5", and perhaps 12" or 13" in diameter. Aside from being consistent with the compact size of the overall kit, such a snare would be more in keeping with the kit's sound palette.

The Bass Drum

I intentionally saved my discussion of the bass drum for last. A bass drum that's only 15" in diameter immediately creates some challenges. To begin with, there's the problem of getting the bass-drum beater impact point at the right level. As one solution to this problem, Canopus supplies the kit with a replacement beater that features a shortened shaft. It also features a sliding metal weight that can add mass to the beater head, thus compensating for the loss of "throw weight" caused by the shorter shaft.

The kit also comes with a metal riser that attaches to the bottom hoop of the bass drum (where the pedal would normally attach), raising the back of the bass drum. The riser is adjustable in height, and is also rubber-coated where it contacts the hoop to prevent any marring. The pedal grips the riser at its bottom edge.

So much for physical description. What about sound? Well, Canopus's literature states, "Conventional thinking has considered 16" to be the smallest feasible bass drum size." Obviously they disagree with that conventional thinking. Unfortunately, I have to disagree with *them*. No matter what heads I equipped it with or how I tried to tune it, the 15" drum did not have the sound I was looking for—even from a "compact" bass drum. It always sounded like a floor tom trying to grow up to be its older brother.

I understand Canopus's zeal to create an ultra-compact kit. But in truth, the "footprint" of a kit has more to do with the depth of a bass drum than with its diameter. I'm pretty sure that a 16" or 18" drum (perhaps with a 12" or 14" depth) would maintain the compactness of the Club Kit while providing the low-end sound worthy of a true "bass" drum. I believe that would benefit this otherwise great-sounding kit.

The Aluminum Snare

Canopus's Aluminum snare drum is not sold as part of the Club Kit. In fact, at 6½" deep and 14" in diameter, it tended to dwarf that diminutive set. However, it was sent to *MD* along with the Club Kit, so that's the way we're reviewing it.

The drum features a 5-mm-thick cast-aluminum shell fitted with eight chrome-plated brass tube lugs mounted centrally on the shell. Die-cast rims are standard equipment top and bottom. The same "washer sandwiches" used on the Club Kit's tension rods are employed here to dampen vibrations and hold tuning. The drum is solidly built, but as you can imagine it's also pretty heavy, weighing in at 11 lb. 11 oz.

The throw-off and snare butt plate use standard drumkey-operated bolts to attach the 20-strand snare wires (made expressly by Canopus as a premium accessory). The snare wires terminate in metal ends that are anchored to the throw-off and butt plate using nylon material. The use of nylon eliminates snare "bounce" and unwanted extraneous noises, and it reduces the possibility of the snares breaking under hard usage.

My only complaint with this drum is that it could use an internal muffler. Of course, there are any number of add-on muffling devices on the market. But I appreciate the convenience of a built-in muffler that lets me switch immediately between wide-open and dampened sounds.

Other than my one minor complaint, I have nothing but good things to say about the Aluminum snare. Whether I played it with sticks, mallets, or brushes, its projection and articulation were second to none. The crack and overtones were clear as a bell, while slightly mellower than those of a steel model. It's rare that you find a drum that has a unique tonal character yet still has the versatility to be a great general-purpose drum. This is one of those rare drums.

THE NUMBERS

Club Kit with wrap or oil finish **$1,950**
Club Kit with stained lacquer finish **$2,020**
Club Kit with burst lacquer finish **$2,150**
The Aluminum snare drum **$1,120**

All shells, hoops, and finishes carry a limited lifetime warranty. This warranty is also transferable to new owners for a one-time fee of $50 through an authorized Canopus dealer.

(888) 860-1668, www.canopus.com.

Toca Synergy Timbale Jingle Snare

Something Different And Fun

HITS

distinctive sound

compact size

easily mounted around the kit

by Rick Van Horn

Once you've selected and arranged the drums and cymbals on your kit to achieve your optimal "traditional" setup, it's fun to start experimenting with "special effects" items. Toca's Synergy Timbale Jingle Snare fits nicely into this category. It's basically what it sounds like: a snare drum/timbale hybrid with the dimensions (and jingles) of an oversized tambourine.

Drum Construction

The Jingle Snare features a $3^1/_2$"-deep shell, with maple interior and exterior plies and four plies of mahogany in between. The single head is tensioned by six lugs. Four double pairs of jingles are fitted, tambourine-style, into the spaces between five of the lugs. In the remaining two spaces are the mounting bracket and the snare tension adjustment.

The snare sound is provided by a small set of snare wires (imagine a standard snare set cut in half) pressed against the underside of the drumhead by a piece of spring steel. The amount of spring pressure is adjustable, but there's no throw-off, so the snares cannot be removed entirely.

The mounting bracket on the Jingle Snare is made to fit 9.5-mm to 12.7-mm L-rods. Now, normally when you suspend a drum, you want it to be as rigid and secure as possible. But the Jingle Snare produces better jingle action when it can "bounce" a little in response to being struck. So although the drum *can* be mounted on any number of devices, Toca suggests the use of SC-DPLRA or SC-DPLAC Double Percussion mounts from Gibraltar. These mounts differ only in the mechanism used to clamp them to a stand or to another mounting rod. Instead of L-arms they have U-shaped arms, with one arm of the "U" longer than the other. This allows you to mount not only the Jingle Snare, but also a bell, block, or other small item above it. The U-shaped arms also provide just enough "flex" to let the Jingle Snare vibrate when struck, thus promoting jingle action.

SC-DPLAC

SC-DPLRA

Sound Performance

The Jingle Snare has some acoustic idiosyncrasies. For example, if the head is too tight, a drumstick tends to rebound before the drumshell can be set into motion, thus

reducing jingle action. (Since the snares aren't completely removable, there's no point in trying to get a high-tension timbale-style sound, anyway.) Likewise, if the snares are too tight, they tend to choke the snare-drum sound. Fortunately, a moderately tensioned head and moderately tensioned snares produced what I thought to be the snare drum sound with the most "character." The very *best* overall response was achieved when I combined moderate head and snare tension with a rimshot. This put direct impact onto the shell, and thus set the jingles into motion even more. Now *that* was a fun sound—sort of Brazilian Carnaval meets jungle/electronica.

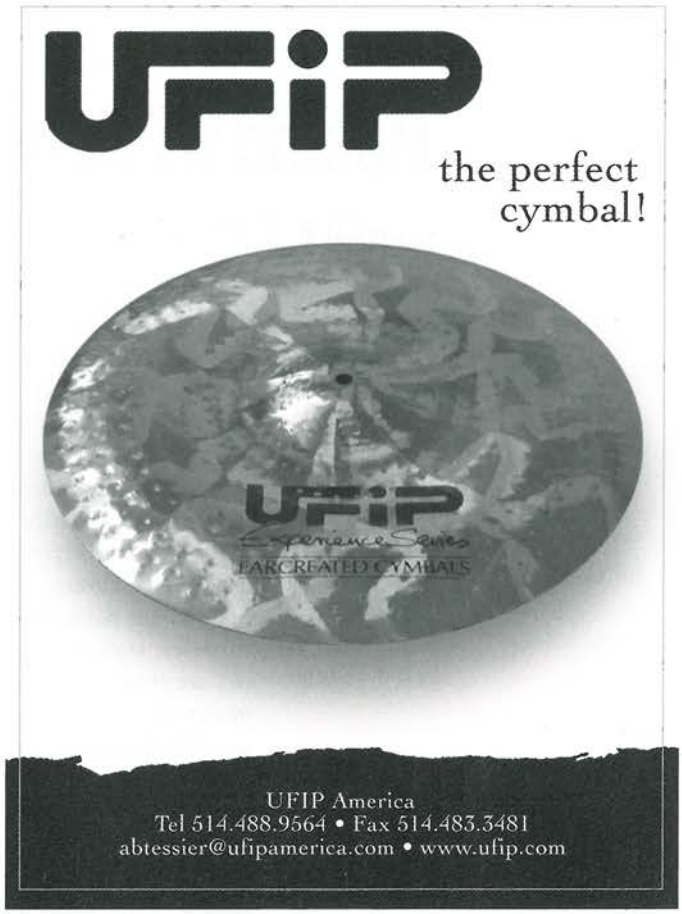
Conclusion

The Synergy Timbale Jingle Snare is available in 10" and 12" diameters. I liked the 10" for its compactness, which makes placing it in tight spaces on a kit a little easier. The 12" size has a bit more fullness to its sound, and might actually work as an auxiliary snare drum rather than strictly as a "special effect." In either case, these drums offer a fairly inexpensive way to spice up the sound of your kit.

THE NUMBERS

10" Toca Synergy Timbale Jingle Snare	$139.50
12" Toca Synergy Timbale Jingle Snare	$149.50
Gibraltar SC-DPLRA Double Percussion mount	$ 35.95
Gibraltar SC-DPLAC Double Percussion mount	$ 37.95

(860) 509-8888, www.kamanmusic.com.



Roland RT Series Drum Triggers

Sturdy Performance In A Delicate Game

HITS

kick and snare triggers offer excellent sensitivity

reliable performance

road-worthy construction

MISSES

tom trigger requires careful programming to avoid cross-talk

by Jim Batcho

In an era where musical-instrument technology can achieve darn near anything, it's odd that drum triggers still reside in the relative dark ages. They're simple little devices—generally a receptor, a wire, a means of attachment, and an output jack. But they're often fragile and temperamental, which doesn't inspire overwhelming confidence in their users.

Up to this point, triggers have come in two varieties: stick-ons and rim-mounts. Stick-ons are frustrating, because they attach permanently to the head with adhesive. When you change heads, you have to struggle to pull the thing off without damaging the electronics. Despite that headache, I've tended to use these types, for two reasons: First, they stick there and stay, which means I don't have to worry about detaching and reattaching them from gig to gig. Second (and more importantly), the direct contact gives me more triggering accuracy than can be achieved with the rim-mount variety.

In contrast, the rim-mount types use a small piece of foam and don't seem to respond as well to subtleties in playing. Then there's the inconvenience of having to take them off at the end of every gig. Both types of triggers have the further drawback of adding a slight but noticeable dampening to a head.

Roland has addressed many of the problems described above with its RT Series Acoustic Drum Triggers. While not a grand leap forward in technology, they do offer a welcome step ahead. Three models are available: the RT-7K Kick Trigger, the RT-5S Snare Trigger, and the RT-3T Tom Trigger.

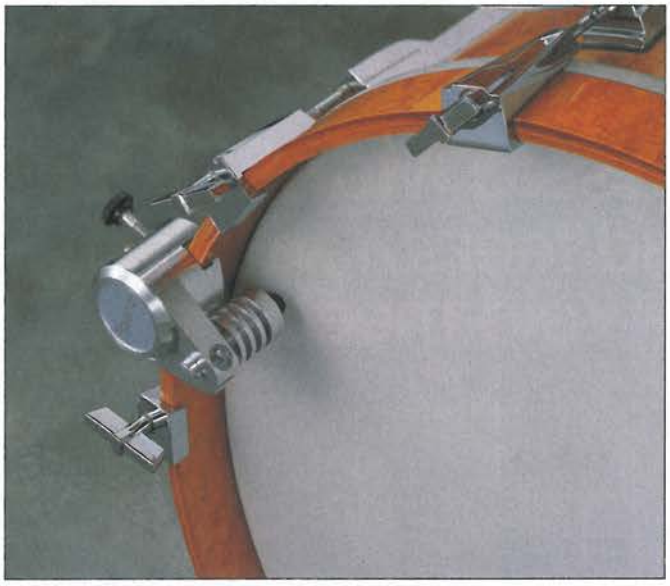
RT-5S

About Triggering

Before taking a closer look at Roland's triggers, let's take a moment to discuss drum triggering itself. A trigger is essentially a pickup device that absorbs physical vibrations (like snare beats), and converts them to an electronic signal. That signal is sent along a typical $^1/_4$" cable to an electronic drum module or sampler, which converts the signal to a chosen programmed sound (like a snare sample). As an added benefit, triggers can discern note velocity (volume), and a module can be programmed to respond accordingly with appropriate volume output sent to a sound-reinforcement system.

Using triggers with sound modules gives live drummers tremendous versatility, since one can change "patches" (sounds) from song to song with the click of a button. A close analogy is that triggering is like playing electric guitar, whereas playing a miked acoustic kit is like playing an acoustic guitar. In fact, triggering is sometimes used as a supplement to typical microphone setups on larger touring shows to give sound engineers more choices over a kit's live mix.

Clearly, since a triggered drumkit sound depends on electronic response, the sensitivity of the triggers themselves is essential. With unreliable or improperly attached triggers (not to mention bad drum-module programming), a note may come through a sound system, or it may not.



RT-7K

This brings us back to Roland's RT triggers. According to the manufacturer, the RTs incorporate advanced V-Drum technology for sensitive response. In theory, that pickup sensitivity will translate to accurate note representation, leading to realistic performances. Whether you're playing ghost notes or rimshots, the trigger should sense this difference in vibration and send the appropriate signal to the module, which should in turn send the appropriate sound to the P.A.

RT-7K And RT-5S Triggers

In reality, no trigger can replace a microphone for sheer subtlety. But our testing revealed that the RT triggers do an admirable job at capturing performance nuances while avoiding the problems associated with other designs. This is in large part due to the RT sensor itself. The RT-7K Kick Trigger and the RT-5S Snare Trigger each feature a tapered foam cone that picks up the head vibrations. The area of contact between the sensor and the head—about $\frac{1}{8}$" in diameter—is extremely small for a trigger. Yet even with this small footprint, the RT sensor is remarkably accurate in picking up varying degrees of pressure. The Roland user manual shows how you can adjust the RT so that just the right amount of contact is made with the head to capture every vibration, without dampening the acoustic sound of the head.

Once the position of the trigger is set on each drum, a convenient screw mechanism tightens it securely in place. You can quickly and easily detach and reattach the trigger simply by loosening and tightening the knob. With each gig, trigger attachment places the sensor at the exact point of contact you originally set.

The snare trigger has the added benefit of a rim-volume control knob. This is handy for dual-trigger snare samples, where the head vibration triggers one sample while a hard rimshot triggers a second, louder sample.

The RT-3T Trigger

The RT-3T Tom Trigger is different from the others in that there is no foam sensor. Instead, it picks up *rim* vibration, not head vibration, and sends that as the electronic signal to trigger the note. It's a logical means of generating tom sounds, since it creates zero dampening effect and keeps the trigger out of the way of being struck by a stick. However, I found the RT-3T to be the least reliable of the three trigger models, simply because rim vibration is susceptible to "cross-talk." This means that a struck second tom might trigger a rim vibration in the first tom and send false signals. It was a bit challenging to program my Roland SPD-20 percussion pad's threshold levels to properly trigger the right note. I was eventually able to get reliable results (with the help of a live sound engineer). But the tom trigger is not as intuitive to use as the other two are.

RT-3T

Details, Details...

Roland hasn't forgotten the fine points with the RT triggers. First of all, they're designed so they lay flat and parallel with a drumhead, which means they stay out of the way and are easy to place. Second, the included output cables are at right angles to the $\frac{1}{4}$" jack, which means they too stay out of the way. Finally, the RT-7K Kick Trigger and RT-5S Snare Trigger come with protective plastic shields for storage, ensuring that the all-important sensor is protected from damage during transport.

A few drummers have commented that the RT triggers seem a little bulky, with their somewhat "Buck Rogers"–looking aluminum casings. However, since miniaturization can contribute to fragility and handling difficulty, there's something to be said for a device that's big and tough enough to take care of itself and be handled easily.

It's nice to know that a company like Roland has taken the effort to take triggering technology to the next level. Triggers are all about trust. I'm happy to report that the RTs are my new triggers of choice because I trust them to work. They're roadworthy, well made, relatively accurate, and easy to attach, remove, and store. For anyone who has considered getting into the exciting realm of live drum triggering to sound modules and samplers, now is as good a time as any to jump right in.

THE NUMBERS

RT-3T Tom Trigger	$ 59
RT-5S Snare Trigger	$ 89
RT-7K Kick Trigger	$ 89
RT-Kit1 (kick, snare, 3 toms)	$335

"What's nice about my Starclassic Maple Kit is I get the vintage look and feel, but I get TAMA's sound– the perfect combination of old meets new."

the ALL-AMERIC

We caught up with Chris Gaylor in Tacoma, Washington right after the band's tour of Japan. "Japan was awesome!" enthused the All-American Rejects drummer, "and the food is amazing. Right now we're going to do some radio dates. Then finally back home." Where's home? "Oklahoma! (Gaylor quickly quotes the lyrics to Rogers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma*) 'where the wind comes sweeping down the plain.' We're the only state with our own musical– how cool is that!"

Oklahoma's strong Midwest marching band tradition is one reason Chris is playing drums today. "I learned to play in marching bands, which was amazingly fun. I played quad toms. That's where a lot of my playing comes from. I started band in 6th grade and took lessons until 8th when I did jazz band stuff and took lessons with an actual kit. My father was a drummer when he was in college, and we'd sit around and listen to Buddy Rich, Philly Joe Jones and Gene Krupa and look at the great pictures of their old vintage drums. I also listened to Dave Grohl a lot. He was kind of the Bonham of my era. As a matter of fact, my other favorite drummers were also playing Tama– Stewart Copeland, Bill Bruford, Kenny Aronoff– and that probably had a lot to do with my decision to go with Tama. The drums always sounded really good and consistent."

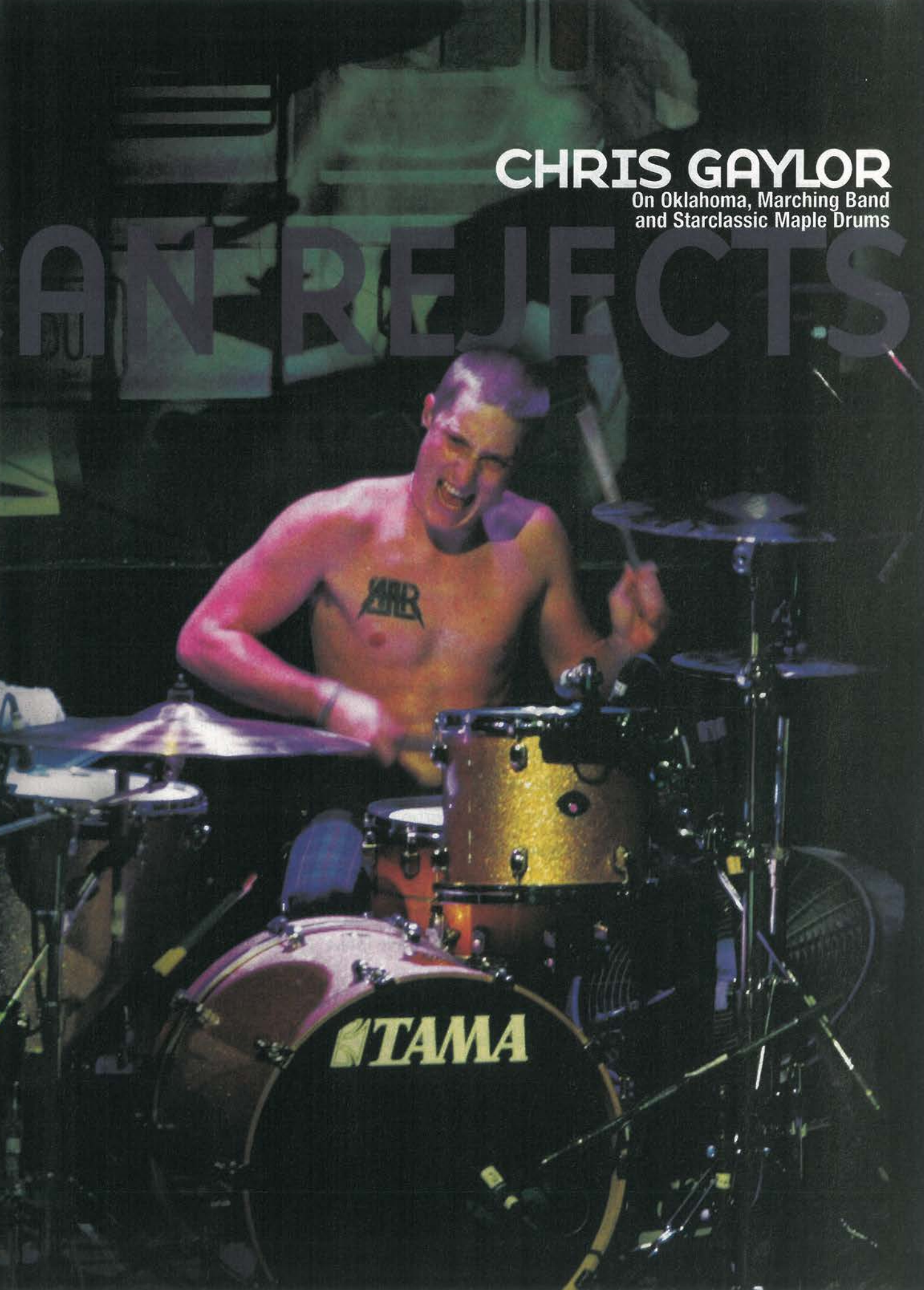
"What's nice about my Starclassic Maple kit is I get the vintage look and feel, but I get Tama's sound– the perfect combination of old meets new. It's a standard sized kit, except for the two snare drums. Which snare I play, depends on the room. I don't do anything technical like switch out the snares. I'm pretty much a meat and potatoes type guy. I'm technical when I'm playing by myself, but in a band, I figure it's best to keep it simple– most of the time."

"I can't see myself ever switching from Tama– everyone should own a Tama kit," laughs Chris. "Well, at least one! This is actually the biggest set I've had so far– I've never had a really big kit in my life, but when I sat down behind the kit with the 24" kick drum for our "Time Stands Still" video, it just felt so comfortable. Some day I'd like to have a giant kit to see what it does. Hear what it sounds like. Just a giant kit to play hard."

"The 8 x 14 G-Maple is the wicked awesome snare drum of all snare drums. You get that gigantic hallway feel, but you can still hear ghost notes on it. When I first bought the 8 x 14 brass, and we were playing small rooms, it would drown out my kick drum, it has such crack to it."

TAMA
THE STRONGEST NAME IN DRUMS

For more information on Chris Gaylor's kit, please visit tama.com
For the 2003-04 Tama Drum & Hardware catalog, send $3.00 to: Tama Dept. MD32, P.O. Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020, or P.O. Box 2009, Idaho Falls, ID 83403


CHRIS GAYLOR
On Oklahoma, Marching Band
and Starclassic Maple Drums
TAMA

Galactic's Stanton

His Time Has Come

One of the marks of greatness in a musician is that you can recognize him after the first couple of notes. Take, for example, New Orleans legend Johnny Vidacovich, who once showed a young student named Stanton Moore a thing or two about playing looser and more slap-happy. As soon as Vidacovich lays sticks to head, you can tell it's him. He's *that* funky—and he's got a sound.

Today that's what everybody's saying about Stanton Moore. The instant you hear one of Moore's monstrous grooves, stuttering press rolls, or "jalopy" tom fills, you recognize him. The thirty-one-year-old drummer is *that* funky—and, man, we haven't even started to talk about his *sound.*

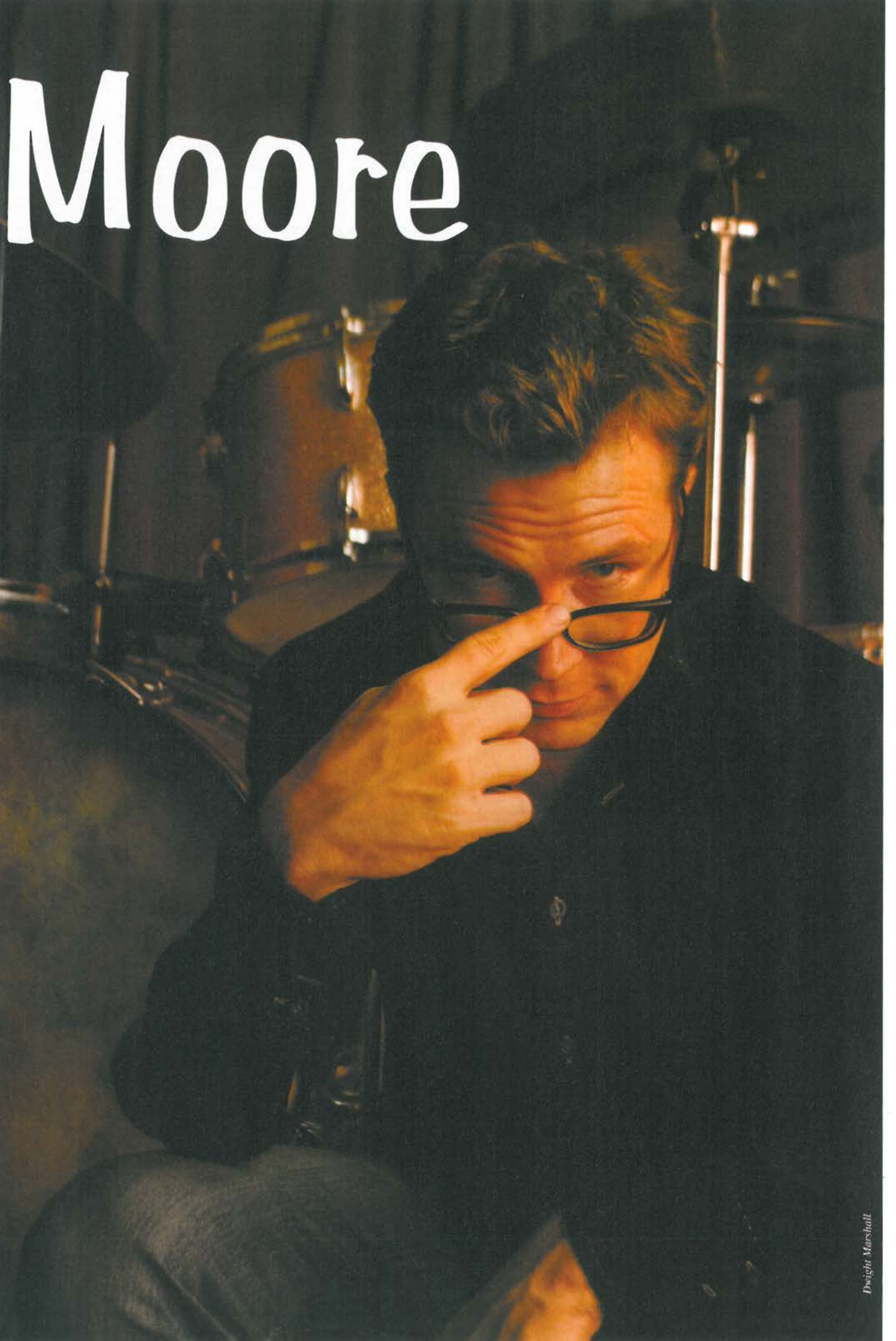
When Stanton gets behind his kit with Galactic, or with one of his many side projects such as Garage A Trois or Moore & More, there's no doubt who it is. Call his sound infectious. Call it part jazz-meets-Bonham. Call it nouveau second-line. No matter; whether he's boppin' behind an 18" champagne-sparkle jazz kick or a battle-worn old 26", Stanton is serving up new-style funk.

Maybe it's a little easier to be funky if you're born in New Orleans and have the likes of Johnny V. steering you right. But it takes something very special to rise to the top, as Stanton has done, and assume a place among the greats—drummers who've risen from the melting pot of Latin, second-line, rhythm & blues, jazz, and funk. New Orleans, after all, is where Earl Palmer, one of the slickest drummers *ever*, started out. It was also home to James Black, a multi-faceted musician people still talk about in hushed tones. And it was fertile ground for the snappy grooves of Meters drummer Zigaboo Modeliste. That's *some* lineage.

Moore is clearly next in line. His band Galactic has emerged proudly from the New Orleans scene, and after a slew of albums and relentless touring, has become the group that others emulate. Without so much as planning it, Galactic has managed to tap into today's pulse while proudly hanging onto yesterday's vibe. The band's latest release, *Ruckus*, proves just that.

Story by T. Bruce Wittet

Moore



Dwight Marshall

The focal point of Galactic is Moore. The Crescent City literally oozes out of him. The life, the food, the marching, the sweaty nightlife—it's all there. At a live show with Galactic, all eyes are on Stanton. As one fan proclaimed on the heels of the band's recent performance at the Roseland Ballroom in New York, "Stanton is the center of the Galactic universe." He's a man in motion, his hands freely traversing his kit, clicking sticks on the rims or shells, beating a jingly thud out of his detuned pandeiro, or even standing up and playing the front side of his ride cymbal. And when he kicks the groove into overdrive with his auxiliary bass drum, a 26" monster, it's a subwoofer from hell. The crowd goes wild.

No question, Moore's time has come. He's everywhere—on tour, on record, and in clinic. Stanton recently won the Eric A. Bergquist award for being one of the top clinicians of the year. He's just completed writing a book on funk and New Orleans drumming. (An accompanying DVD was just filmed and features Stanton performing with New Orleans music royalty George Porter, Ivan Neville, and The Dirty Dozen horns.) Besides having already released two solo albums, Stanton recently contributed a track to the *MD*/Magna Carta collaborative CD, *Drum Nation*. And now he's receiving calls to produce other bands. It seems *everybody* wants a piece of Stanton Moore.

Dwight Marshall

MD: Let's start off by discussing your most recent solo album, *Flyin' The Koop*. It marked the debut of that mighty bass drum. What's the story behind that drum?

Stanton: Every year for the last eight or nine, Galactic has played Lundi Gras, which is the night before Mardi Gras. Then, once the sun comes up, we hit the Julu parade and march around playing and looking for the Mardi Gras Indians. They're something people like to see, and they don't have a route drawn out, so you have to go find them.

We have our own little crew, started by The New Orleans Klezmer Allstars, which is a band [Galactic saxophonist] Ben Ellman and I played in for several years. Being that Klezmer music is Jewish music and we were following the Zulu parade, we started calling ourselves The Crew Of Julu. I was supposed to bring a bass drum to march with, but at the time I didn't have any drum other than a vintage Slingerland I was using at Benny's [club].

Then I noticed that at Benny's there was this big 26" bass drum hanging on the wall. Felix, who ran the club, let me borrow it. It had calf heads on both sides and Mardi Gras beads hanging on it. I put some duct tape on strategic spots and made it sound pretty good, then went out and played it and had a *blast*. And then, before I could give the thing back, the club closed down and Felix told me, "Just keep it."

I started creating loops with the drum and it sounded really cool, especially when you compressed the heck out of it. So I started thinking, What if I add it to my kit and play it with a remote pedal? I had a double pedal lying around, so I started bringing that pedal and bass drum to gigs. So now I have two different bass drums for two different sounds, and I play each with my right foot.

On the new Galactic record, *Ruckus*, it's the *only* bass drum I used. Aside from a few samples, it's the one. On "Bittersweet," "Gypsy Fade," "The Moil"—on all those, it's that big bass drum.

MD: Did you have to muffle the drum to record it?

Stanton: I think we used a strip of tape on the batter side and maybe a little piece of

Stanton's "Classics"

Drums: Gretsch "round badge" ('60s era) in champagne-sparkle finish

A. 5x10 maple snare
B. 12" LP pandeiro
C. 4x14 Gretsch custom snare (or 4x14 Dunnett titanium)
D. 8x12 tom
E. 16x16 floor tom
F. 14x20 bass drum
G. 12x26 bass drum

Cymbals: Bosphorus

1. 14" Traditional hi-hats
2. 20" Traditional crash (or Masters series)
3. 22" Traditional ride
4. 20" Pang
5. LP cowbell

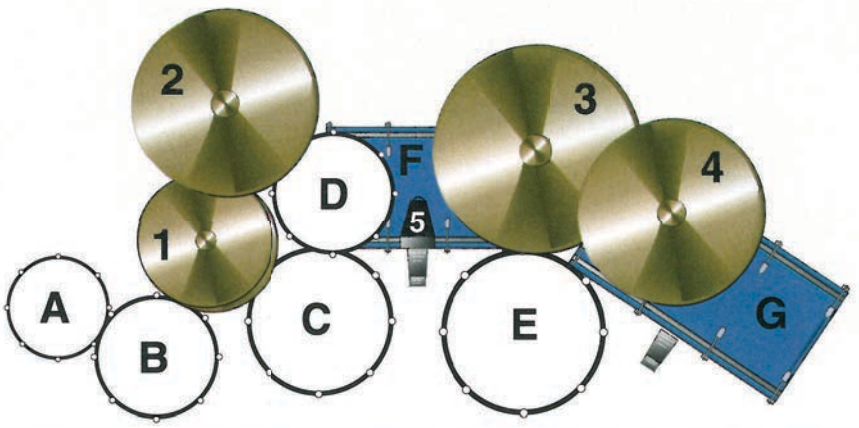
Hardware: DW, including a 5000 series strap-drive single pedal (loose spring tension, Danmar beaters) for main bass drum and a double pedal hooked to the 26" bass drum.

Heads: Remo coated Ambassadors on snare batter and snare-side, as well as on toms, coated PowerStroke 3 on bass drum batter with FiberSkyn 3 on front (very little muffling)

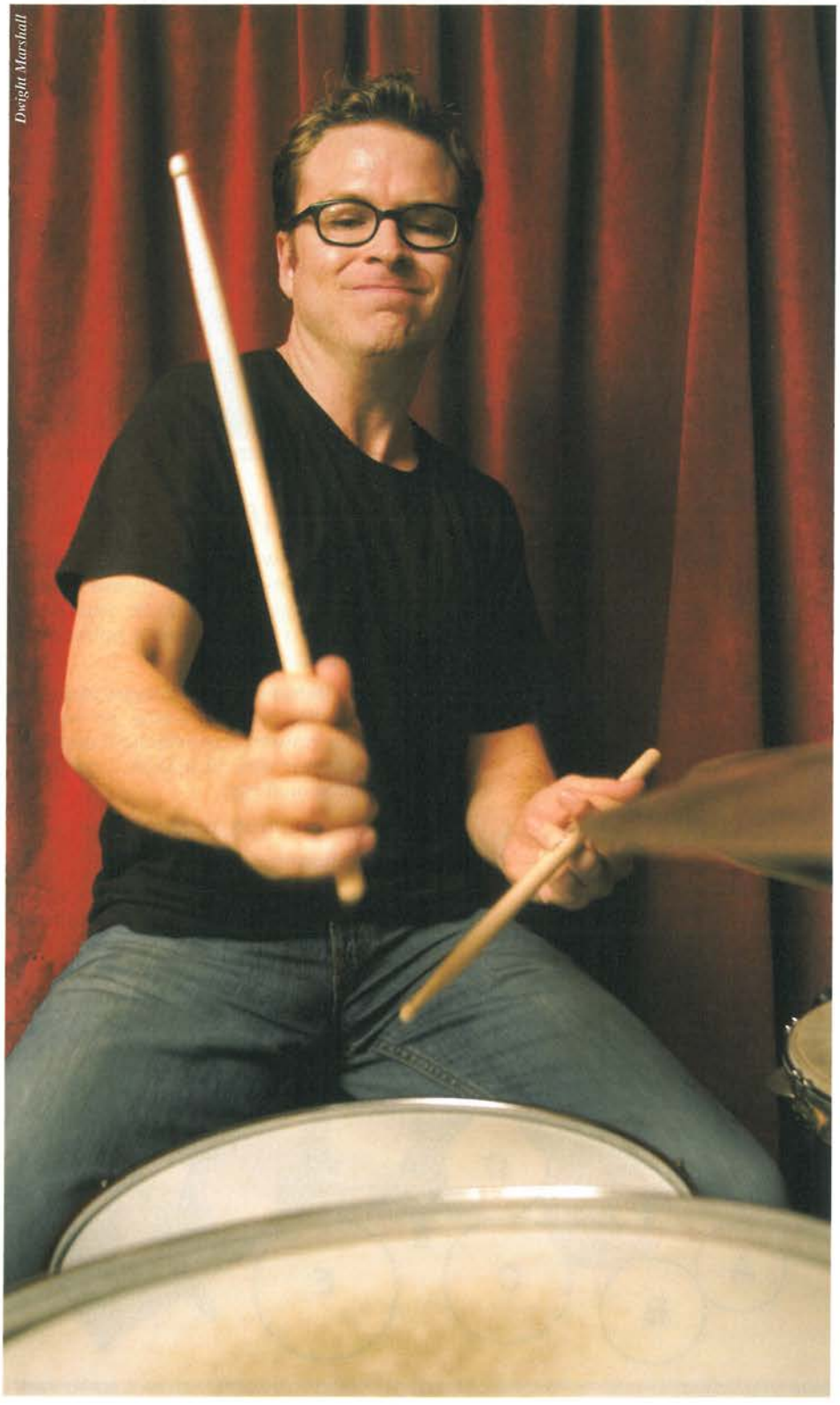
Sticks: Vic Firth 5A (maple) model

Microphones: Audix

Electronics: Boomerang phrase sampler running through various "stomp boxes" (guitar pedals)



"I like to blur the lines between jazz and funk and improvise on the groove—just float through it."



duct tape on the front. Sometimes we may have leaned a pillow up against it, too. But any muffling was on the outside of the drum; there wasn't a single thing inside.

I wasn't really intending on using that bass drum on the whole record, but Mike Napolitano, our engineer, suggested we set up a sort of *Flintstones* kit with congas for toms. I had a cross between a djembe and a floor tom that somebody made for me. I was using a Remo Mondo snare that a friend loaned me. All the drums had either calfskin heads or simulated calfskin heads. On the big bass drum, the calf heads had split, so there was a Fiberskyn on the audience side and an Ambassador on the batter side.

That drum doesn't even have a pin in the center of the shell for a lug, just the long rods across the shell. You turn the rods and they tension both batter and audience-side heads. It's bare-bones!

MD: I know that on *Flyin' The Koop*, you used Bosphorus cymbals. But on your previous solo album, *All Kooked Out!*, you used old A Zildjian cymbals. I could have *sworn* they were old Ks. Those cymbals sound *so* good.

Stanton: Thanks. On *All Kooked Out!*, the ride was an A Zildjian 20" from maybe the mid- to late-'60s, and the pang was a mid- to late-'70s model. The hi-hats were a mismatched pair of 13s that I found at two different pawnshops in Florida. The top was an '80s K, but the bottom...it looks like a K, but it has no stamp, and some kid painted "Paiste" across the bottom. It has a small center hole like an old cymbal, and it's really hammered.

One of those cymbals was an A Zildjian pang. Now with Bosphorus, we've designed a similar pang type of cymbal and we're into several prototypes. The one I'm using right now is like, *Caw!* It's not very China-ish at all—it's buttery, and if anything it's a hair less cantankerous than the Zildjian pang. By that, I mean there's a little less attack.

I still have all those A Zildjians. Back

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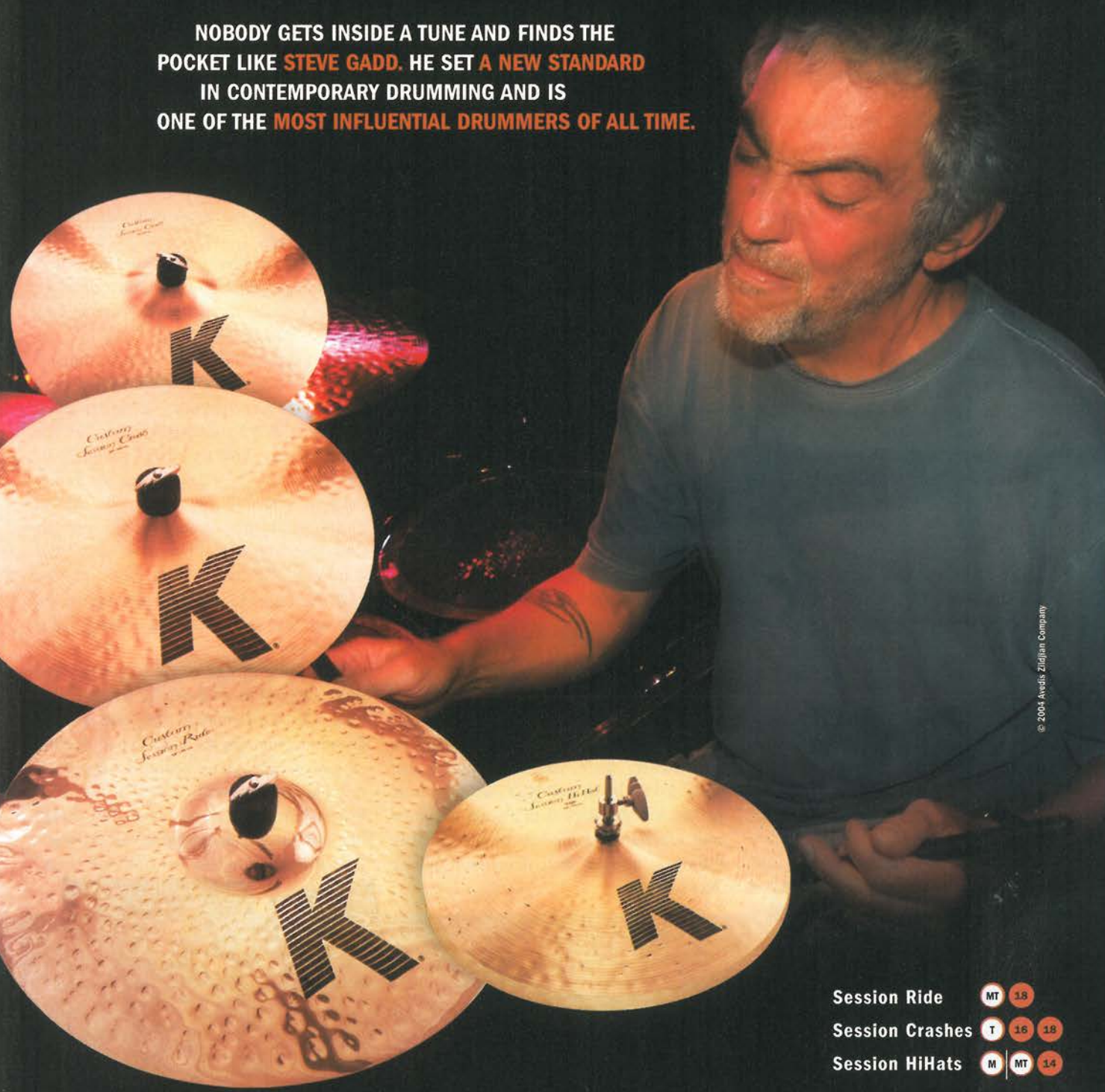

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Artist	Album
Stanton Moore	Flyin' The Koop (2002)
Stanton Moore	All Kooked Out! (1998)
Garage A Trois	Emphasizer (2003)
Galactic	Ruckus (2003)
Galactic	We Love 'Em Tonight: Live At Tipitina's (2001)
Galactic	Late For The Future (2000)
Galactic	Crazyhorse Mongoose (1998)
Galactic	Coolin' Off (1996)
New Orleans Klezmer Allstars	The Big Kibosh (1997)
New Orleans Klezmer Allstars	Manichalfwitz (1996)
Robert Walter's 20th Congress	Money Shot (2000)

then, what I *really* wanted were old Turkish-made Ks, but they were getting hard to find. Besides, I couldn't really afford them, so I would find old As at pawnshops for something like eighty bucks. I'd choose the ones with a darker sound.

MD: So do Bosphorus cymbals measure up to old Ks?

Stanton: I think that Bosphorus makes great cymbals. There's never going to be anything that's exactly like an old K, but, to be honest, I like a lot of my Bosphorus cymbals *more* than most Ks I've heard. I have a few old Ks that are killing, and the Bosphorus are definitely in that lineage—the hand-hammered Turkish tradition—but they're not necessarily trying to copy old Ks.

I love to have guys come over to the house and bring their cymbals. I've got my own cymbals on shelves behind my drums, and we just keep pulling cymbals out and playing them. I get to hear a lot of cymbals that guys have spent fifteen hundred dollars on, or traded this or that for, and some are great cymbals.

MD: On *Flyin' The Koop*, what drums were you using?

Stanton: I was using the same kit I used at the *Modern Drummer* Festival: the big bass drum along with the Gretsch 18" bass drum, and 12" and 14" toms. For that album, we experimented with mic' placement and got the drums sounding good.

MD: On "Fallin' Off The Floor," in which you have the Mardi Gras Indians chanting, what rhythm are you playing?

Stanton: It's basically a 2-3 clave. There are two rhythms going on: a loop of this rhythm that I call "The Magnolia Special," which is my interpretation of the Mardi Gras Indian stuff, and this other New Orleans–type rhythm I'm playing between the pandeiro and a snare drum with the snares off.

MD: On the track "Let's Go," which is kind of a rolling Bo Diddley beat, you rode and crashed a lot of cymbals. If you were to re-cut that track today, would you do all of that cymbal work? The reason I ask is that on *Ruckus*, there's hardly any cymbals to be heard.

Stanton: Yeah! Our goal with *Ruckus* was to create grooves that were super relentless

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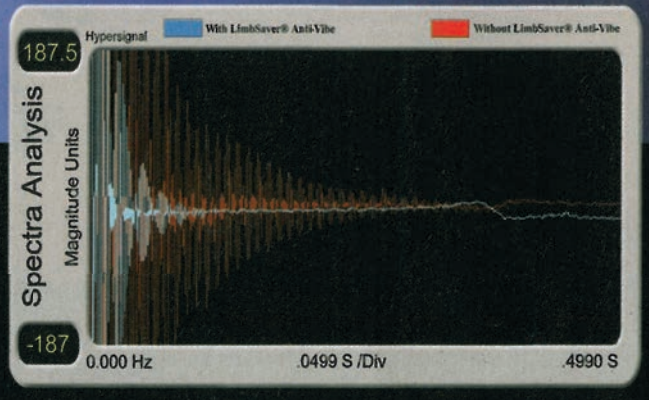

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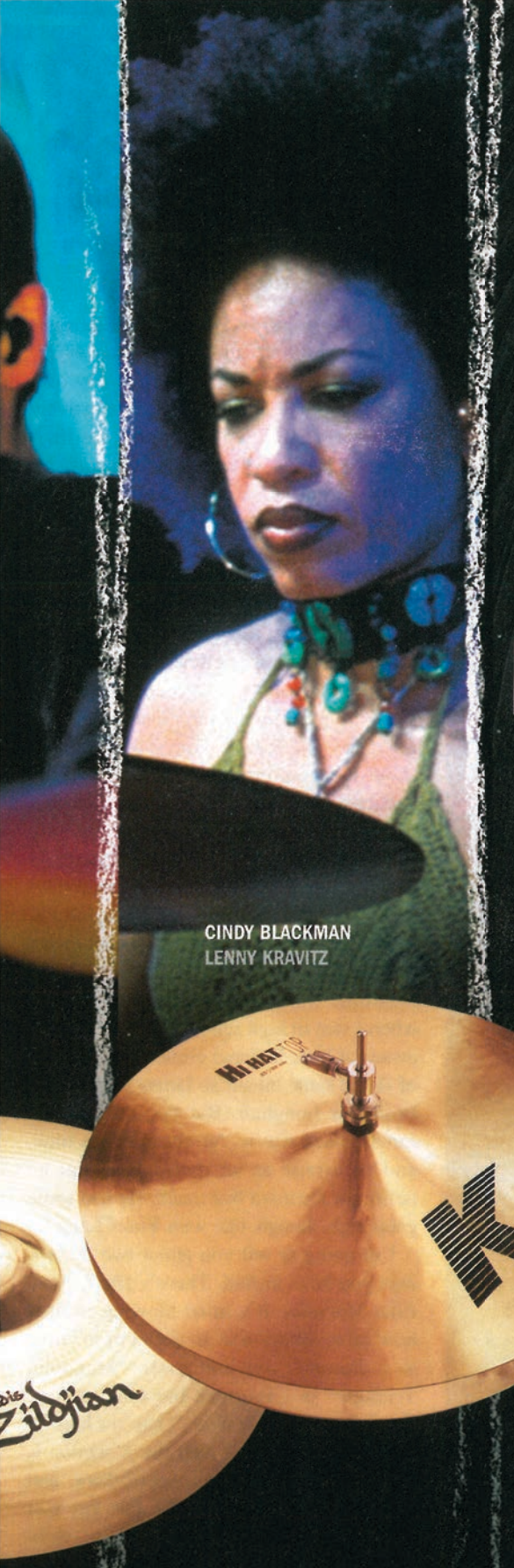

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and head-bopping, so that the listener couldn't stop moving. Whereas on *Flyin' The Koop*—and when I'm left to my own devices—I like to play more interactively and expressively. I like to blur the lines between jazz and funk. With *Ruckus*, we decided to make all of the grooves clobber you over the head: It was definitely less of a jazz approach.

MD: Did the *Ruckus* experience shape your style permanently, or do you still have the other side waiting to come out?

Stanton: Oh, of course! I'm putting together my next solo record, and it's going to be definitely more along the lines of *Flyin' The Koop*. What you're talking about is where my heart is—but it's with Galactic, too. And I get to play like that with Garage A Trois, my side project with Charlie Hunter, Mike Dillon, and Skerik.

MD: "Magnolia Triangle" [from *Flyin' The Koop*] fascinates me. The composer is James Black: Did you get a chance to see him play?

Stanton: Unfortunately, he passed away when I was in high school and before I was aware of him. In some circles, he's spoken of in the same breath as James Booker and Professor Longhair. But the thing is that James Black was so far ahead of his time, and so erratic as an individual, that he never got recorded that much. He had some great gigs, though, like with Yusef Lateef.

I'm going to tell you about two recordings you *have* to find. There's *The Classic Ellis Marsalis*: It's mind-blowing to hear how James Black was so ahead of his time as a drummer *and* composer. "Magnolia Triangle" is a fourteen-bar tune in five. Another tune, "Dee Wee," has six bars of three as the intro and then the A section is four bars of five, a measure of three, and then four bars of five. In '63, this guy was playing polyrhythms that blow me away today, and they're over bars of *five*. And he's crossing the bar lines! Black was playing stuff people still can't play today.

Another record is Eddie Bo's *Hook & Sling*. It was recorded in 1969. The first

Meters record came out in 1969 as well. Either James Black was playing Zig's [Zigaboo Modeliste] stuff before Zig was playing it, or they were both playing that stuff at the same time. James Black was *the man* in New Orleans.

MD: Let's move on to Galactic's latest work, *Ruckus*. The first thing you hear is that strong descending fill, followed by absolute bottom end. Observation one: Your fills have changed. They still swing, but you're so much more "on the beat" and nailing them. All I can think of is John Bonham.

Stanton: Cool! With this record, there was definitely a lot of that. In the last couple of years, I've been trying to think of ways of adding intensity to a groove without necessarily having to play more notes or play louder. The main way of doing that is "straightening out" the notes a little bit. I'm swinging a *little* bit less and moving a little more towards straight. Then every now and then I'll play a fill that comes out swung, because that's the way I play, and the contrast works.

MD: That's really a John Bonham thing.

Stanton: Oh yeah, totally! That's one of the things I dig about Bonham, Zig, Keith Moon, and Mitch Mitchell. Those guys grew up playing shuffled 8th notes and listening to blues and jazz. When they tried to straighten this stuff out, they couldn't help but swing it a little bit. I'm always experimenting with that place between straight and swung.

MD: How does a larger bass drum affect your style?

Stanton: That big bass drum enabled us to make everything super fat. With that drum I was tending to play less as a jazz player and interactively, which is usually the way I play funk. I like to blur the lines between jazz and funk and improvise on the groove—just float through it. The big bass drum made me think a little more from the bottom up; it's more of a meat 'n' potatoes thing.

MD: Forward to *Ruckus*. On "Bongo Joe," what's the woman on the sample saying to her child?

Stanton: It's in Japanese. We've been to Japan several times, and Ben [Ellman] is enamoured with Japanese culture. For that track, he found some Japanese dialog off a cartoon and sampled it.

MD: And for the second time on the album, we've got that beautiful juxtaposition of harmonica and fat bottom end. Is that snare the Remo Mondo?

Stanton: I think it is. Ben came in with a loop and I played all over it. I let the loop run and then came up with a groove. Then this harmonica part came to my mind. We were going for a spaghetti-western vibe, and the harmonica seemed right.

MD: In "Gypsy Fade," you're doing this neat little cross-stick flam. Can you explain how you created this sound?

Stanton: It's something I caught when I saw Erykah Badu in Philly. I'm playing cross-stick with my left hand and hi-hat with my right, but when it comes to the backbeat, I'm hitting my right stick on top of my left stick, which is still resting on the snare drum for the cross-stick. I can open it up by widening the flam that the two sticks make.

MD: I understand you used a different sort of "click track" for *Ruckus*.

Stanton: Yeah, I'd go in and play a groove and get everybody's agreement on the feel

and tempo. I'd record it and then we'd pick one bar and loop it. So then I'd have a loop of myself to play to. Doing that makes it much less mechanical than playing with a click track. Sometimes we would layer other sounds on the loop, like brake drum sounds, and everybody would go, "Wow, that's crazy. Let's go play. This will be fun!"

I actually started doing that on *Flyin' The Koop.* You can take the loop out after, or you can use part of it and run it through an effect—run it through a speaker and stick the speaker in a trash can and mike the trash can! If you play on top of that groove, it's going to give you consistency throughout the tune.

We're always trying to take new technology in a way that feels comfortable to us. Yeah, we're playing to loops, but we're playing to loops of *me*. Even though we all use old, vintage instruments, we try to put a new spin on it. At one time I was a purist and didn't want to deal with technology, but now I'm learning that you can create art with it.

MD: On "Uptown Odyssey," we hear that unique "cross-stick flam" again. I kept thinking you were going to go to the open snare, but you held back until the end of the song.

SM: I *was* going to the open snare on the chorus, but Robert [Mercurio, bassist] said it sounded better on cross-stick. To me, while I was playing it, it sounded better going to open snare, but when I listened back, I realized he was right. We're all open to suggestions in this band. When I finally went to the open snare, I think it was my Slingerland reissue 6½x14 solid-shell Radio King. I've had nothing but good luck with that drum.

MD: "Kid Kenner": To me, it's almost a soul beat meets electronica, a real bouncing groove.

Stanton: That one is right hand on the cowbell and left hand alternating between hi-hat and snare drum. I made a loop and ran it through a Comptortion pedal and compressed the hell out of it. That loop is the beginning of the tune before you hear the acoustic guitar, and then there's a part where I'm playing four on the floor while my left hand is on the pandeiro—that's the jingle sound you hear.

MD: "Tenderness" is a cover, but for the life of me I can't place it. Sounds like an old soul ballad.

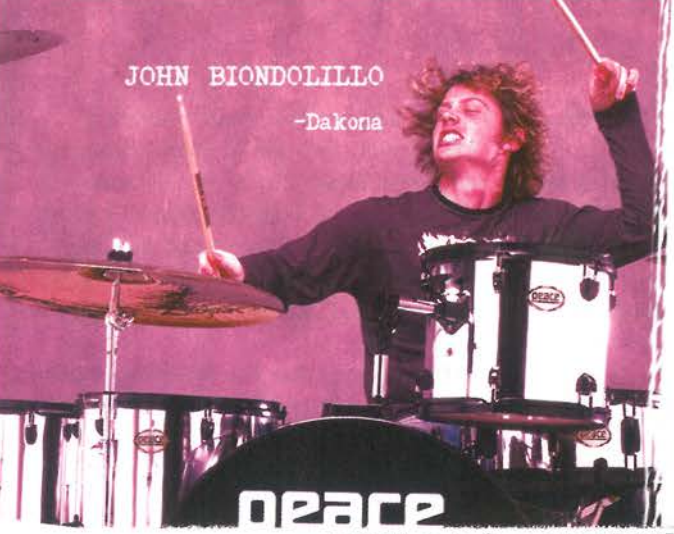
Stanton: No, that's the old General Public tune we slowed down.

MD: What are you hitting before the chorus to make that clicking sound?

Stanton: I'm glad you asked about that. Again, I played a loop and superimposed some sounds and made it fat. Then I went and played live drums over it. *Then* I played a rhythm very similar to the loop on "Fallin' Off The Floor." There are several levels, and one of them is me playing on the rim or side of the floor tom. It was our producer's idea to do implied New Orleans stuff underneath.

MD: You say you never play a double pedal in the conventional manner. But in "All Behind You Now," there are sections where I could have sworn you were using a double pedal with two beaters on one drum.

Stanton: One of the things I did was play a four-on-the-floor pattern into the Boomerang [phrase sampler], and then "reversed" it in the Boomerang. It comes out "whoosh, wick, whoosh," and then I'll take that and play something more involved over the top of it. Next I'll over-



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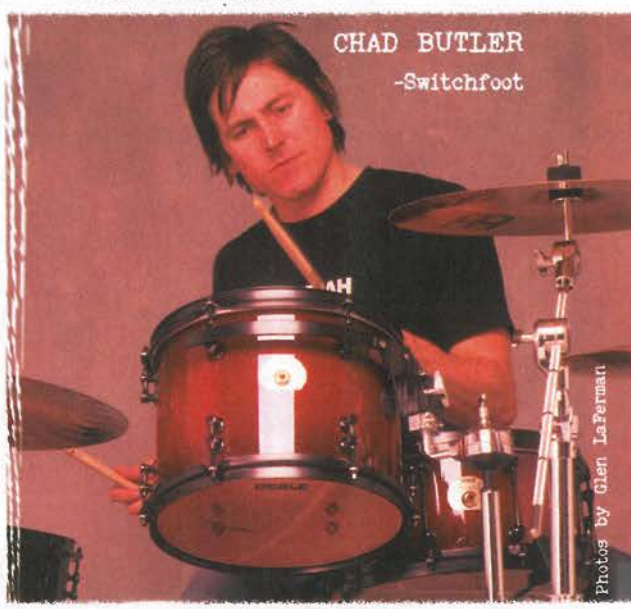

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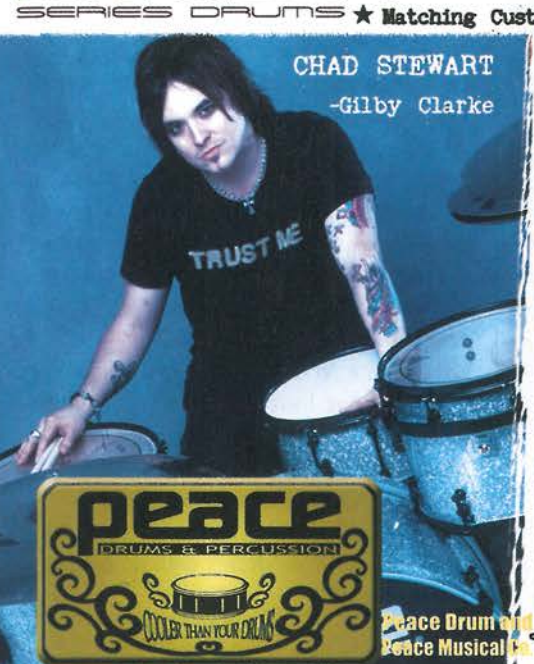

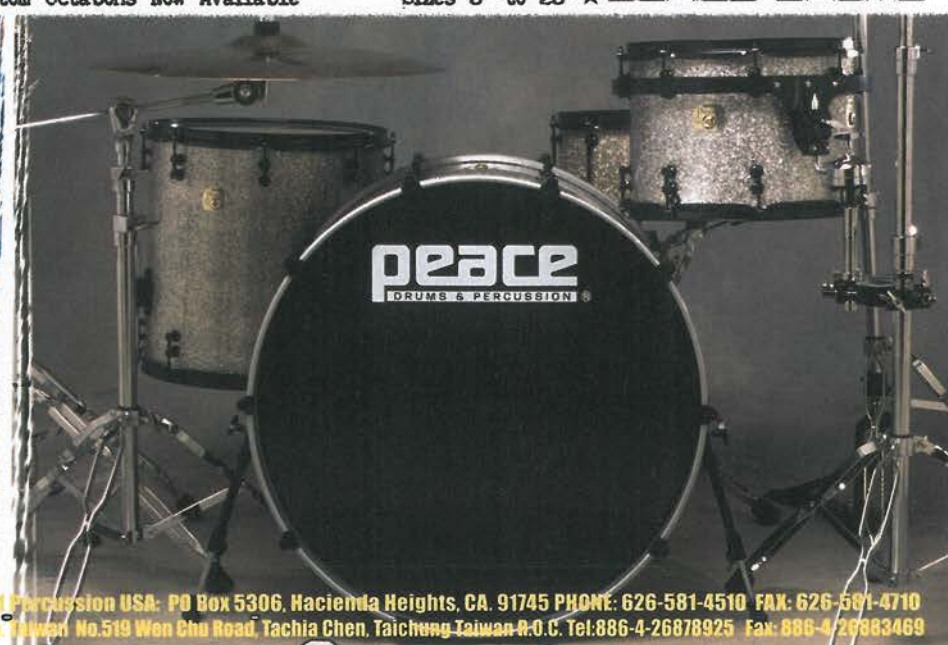

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dub that in the Boomerang and reverse *that*, so that the more involved stuff is now reversed. So what you might be hearing during the guitar and drum breakdown is the backwards loop again.

What's really hilarious is that I did the initial sample at a soundcheck while our monitor guy, John Hardee, was testing a Wurlitzer piano. You can hear a chromatic scale in the background. Check it out at the beginning of the song. At the guitar breakdown, I'm playing a Brazilian samba, with that reversed loop underneath.

MD: Which brings us to the last song on *Ruckus*, "Doomed," with its Bonham-like introduction.

Stanton: This one, again, I created in the Boomerang. It's a two-bar loop and I ran it through a flanger and a Sans amp, which is a guitar preamp that crunches up the sound. The funny thing is that it sounds great on everything *except* guitar, but it sounds really good on drums!

Once you've got your thing looped, you can put it through any guitar effects box. This tune has no live drums; it's all loops. What happens around 1:23 is that we copy the original loop, then start it up, this time a 16th note late: It's sort of "stuttering."

MD: You have a ton of charisma onstage when you're performing with Galactic. Are you conscious about the extent to which people see you as the center of the group?

Stanton: Not really, especially touring this latest record. I feel like I'm playing songs a little bit more.

MD: It seems that you're hitting harder and using more matched grip on stage than earlier in your career. When I saw you with Moore & More, I thought you were playing softer and that you were using more traditional grip.

Stanton: I tend to use traditional grip when I play jazz, or more of the New Orleans second-line stuff. But I like to play backbeats with matched grip. With Galactic, we've definitely been hitting harder, but then I started backing off and making a conscious effort to play quieter.

At the start of the last tour, I was cracking my maple 5As left and right, so I switched to hickory 5As. After I made an effort to play looser, though, I went back to the maples and could go through an entire gig without breaking a stick. Again, it's about playing with intensity but not bashing. Bonham was a master of that. Sure, he had bigger sticks and big drums, but he wasn't really hitting them that hard.

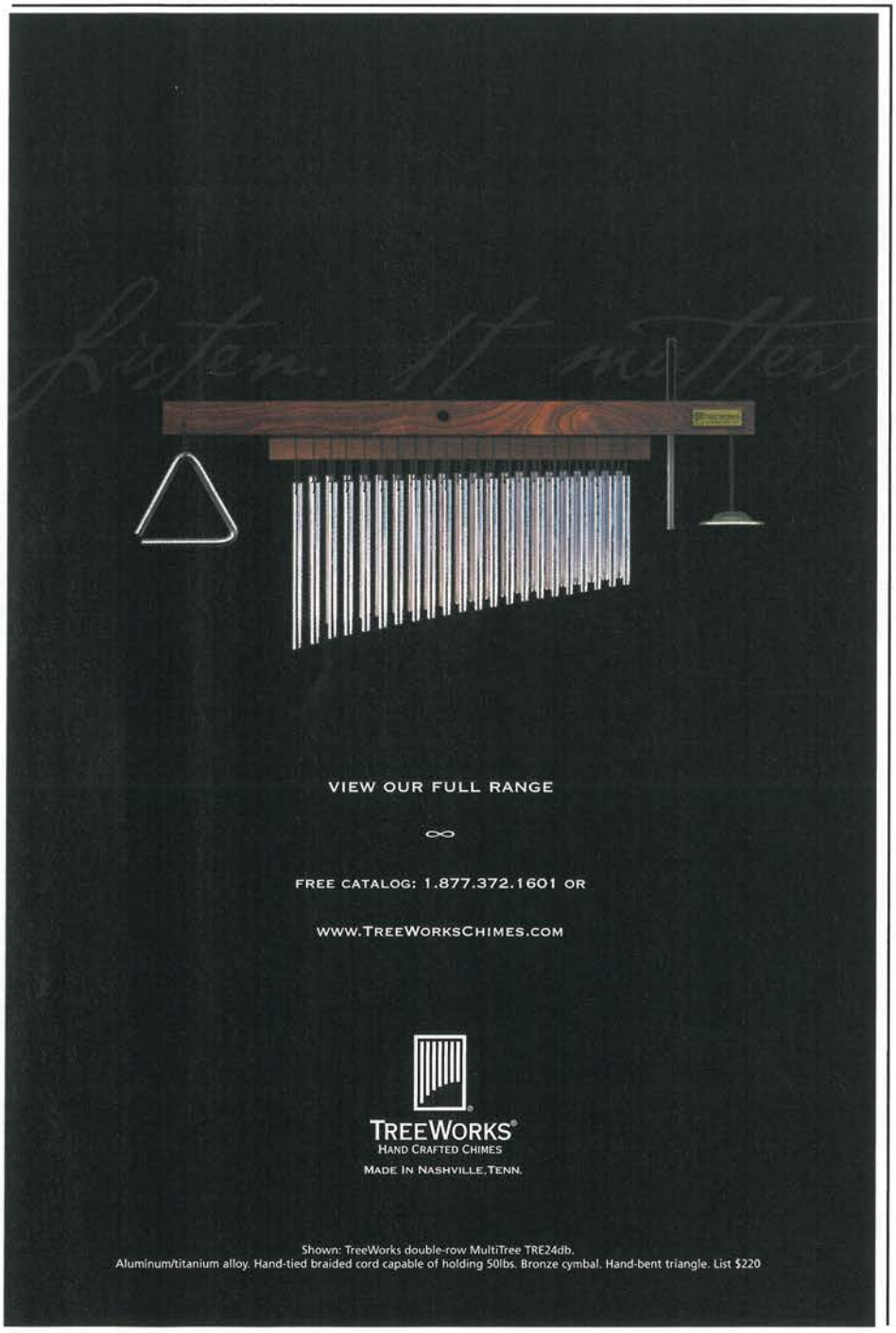
Watch Led Zeppelin's *DVD*. When Bonham chokes up on the right stick he's got a giant, gaping hole between his thumb and forefinger. It looks to me as if he's using the thumb and middle finger as a fulcrum, which is what I do, and not the thumb and forefinger, because there's less tension. If you pinch the thumb and first finger, you see the tendons tighten up. Pinch the thumb and the middle finger and there's no tension.

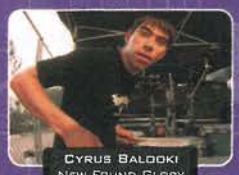
Lately, even with traditional grip, I've been experimenting with pinching between the thumb and the middle finger. But the funny thing is that I was looking at a picture of me playing—and there wasn't a single finger touching the stick! I was playing *so* loose, just using my thumb and my hand.

MD: With a 26" bass drum, I'm presuming it's a similar loose technique and that you're releasing the beater from the head in order to get full resonance.

Stanton: I always release the beater.

MD: And what we're hearing, live and in the studio, are bass drums with no holes in the front heads?

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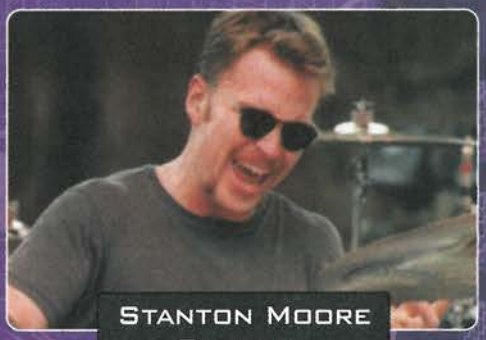
Stanton Moore
Galactic

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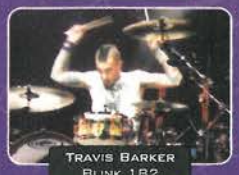
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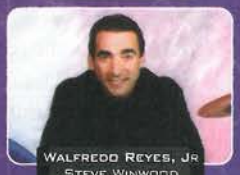
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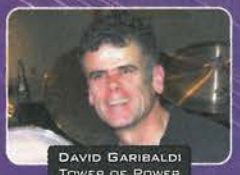
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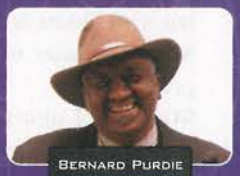
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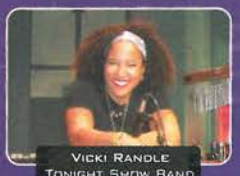
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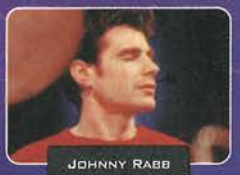
Tonight Show Band

Luis Conte

Jen Lowe
Acres

Zoro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Stanton: Live with Galactic, there's a 4" hole in the 20". With Garage A Trois, there's no hole. And the 26" never has a hole. On *Emphasizer,* with Garage A Trois, and *Flyin' The Koop*, that's an 18" with no hole.

I think the hole is easier for engineers to deal with. Our engineer likes the hole for big rooms because he can open up the low end in the EQ and make it fat. If I give him something that's already fat, it's hard to take that and put it through the PA. It's weird because my 26" sounds wide open and gargantuan and has no hole. It's miked from the player's side. Usually with an 18" or 20" with no hole, I'm miking from the batter side; I'm coming up from under the floor tom. The Audix D6 works well for that.

MD: You've recently gone to a 12" first tom and a 16" floor tom. Any changes in your approach to tuning?

Stanton: I nearly always use coated Ambassadors on everything—the top and bottom of my toms, the snare batter and snare side, and the bass drum. I'll tune them up a little more for a jazz gig, but in general I tune the bottom head a little bit higher than the top. I don't fight the drum: I find out where the drum likes to sit. I don't necessarily tune *way* high.

My Gretsch drums have a wide tuning span, but I try not to get them too high or too low. Nowadays, if I'm going to tune them up or down, I'll mess mostly with the top head and leave the bottom one alone, maybe keep it a little tighter.

MD: How would you describe the difference between the new Gretsch drums and your vintage round-badge Gretsch kit?

Stanton: Just last night I had a friend over. We opened up a bottle of wine and set up my new Gretsches—12", 14", and 18"—and then we set up the old round-badge kit in the same sizes. It may be an unfair comparison, because I haven't replaced the new Gretsch bottoms with coated Ambassadors, which mellow out the tone. But the main difference I hear is that, with the new drums, the overtones are a little *wilder*. The drums sound really good, and I was pleasantly surprised.

MD: You're involved in a staggering number of projects. Can you outline some of these?

Stanton: Besides working with Galactic, I've done two tours in the last few months with Garage A Trois. I'm playing tonight with Moore & More, opening up for The Meters. I'm working on a book: my take on New Orleans drumming and how I apply it to funk. There'll be a DVD along the same lines, to mirror what I cover in my clinics and the book. I'm working on a 20" "trash-crash ride" with Bosphorus. We're going to call the other cymbal I told you about a "Pang Thang." I contributed a track to the *Drum Nation* CD. And I co-produced an album with Robert Mercurio for The Greyhounds. They're a Texas organ trio, but they also have vocals, which is hip. The drum sound is great.

MD: How's the rest of 2004 looking?

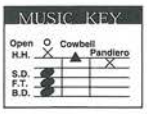
Stanton: Galactic will be going to Japan, Australia, and Europe. We're starting writing for a new Galactic album, I'm working on my next solo record, and I'm still playing with Moore & More.

MD: Any hints on staying sane when you get so busy?

Stanton: I don't know. I dig what I'm doing. I have a girlfriend and I miss her when I'm away, but I guess I've gotten used to life on the road. Things have been good.

For more on Stanton, check out www.stantonmoore.com, www.galacticfunk.com, and www.garageatrois.com.

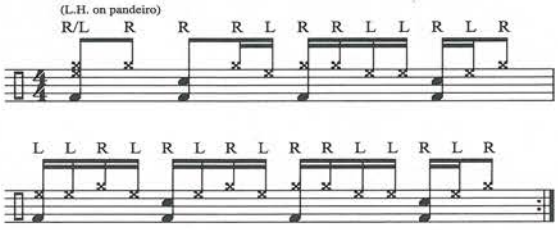
Moore Grooves



Here's a taste of some of the funky beats that Stanton Moore plays on the most recent discs by Galactic (*Ruckus*) and Garage A Trois (*Emphasizer*), transcribed by the drummer himself. Be sure to check out the actual recordings to hear how Stanton creates his magic.

"Kid Kenner" (intro, looped and run through Comptortion pedal), *Ruckus*

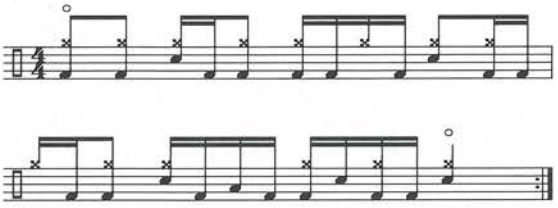
"Kid Kenner" (first verse)



"Kid Kenner" (second verse)

"Doomed" (main groove), *Ruckus*

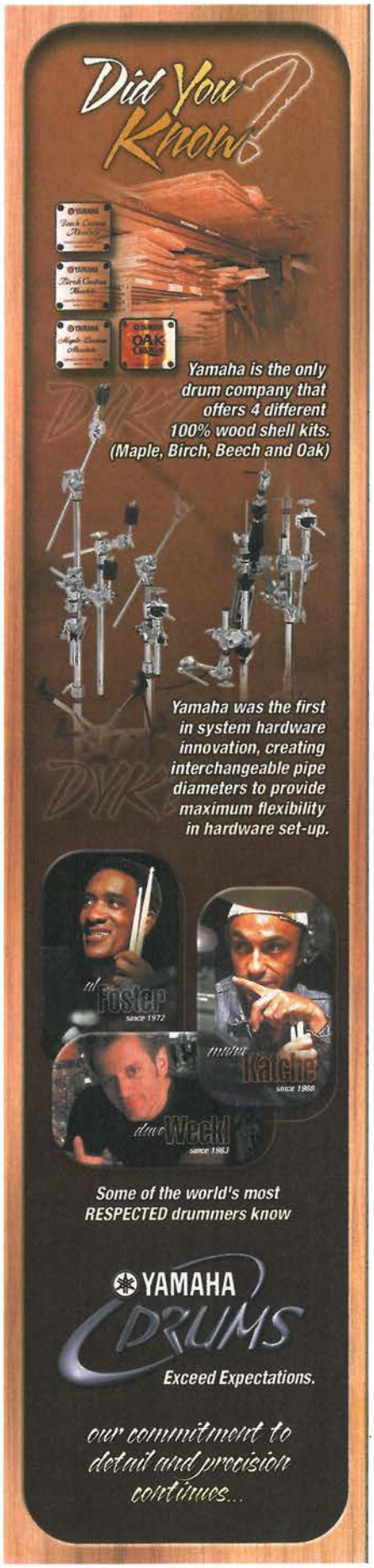
"The Moil" (intro), *Ruckus*



"Hardheaded Rio," *Emphasizer*

"Sprung Monkey," *Emphasizer*

"Gat Swamba," *Emphasizer*



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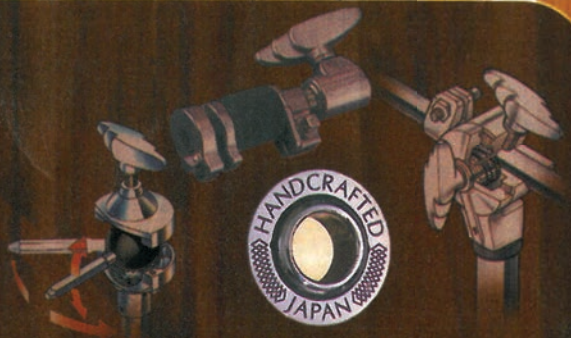

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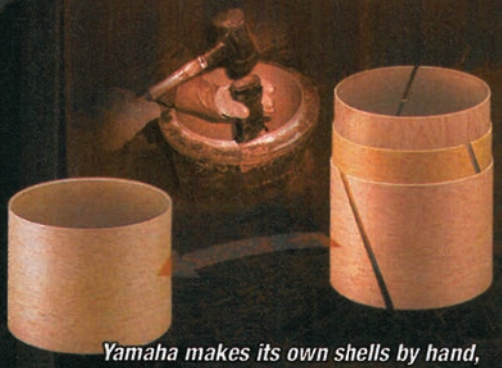

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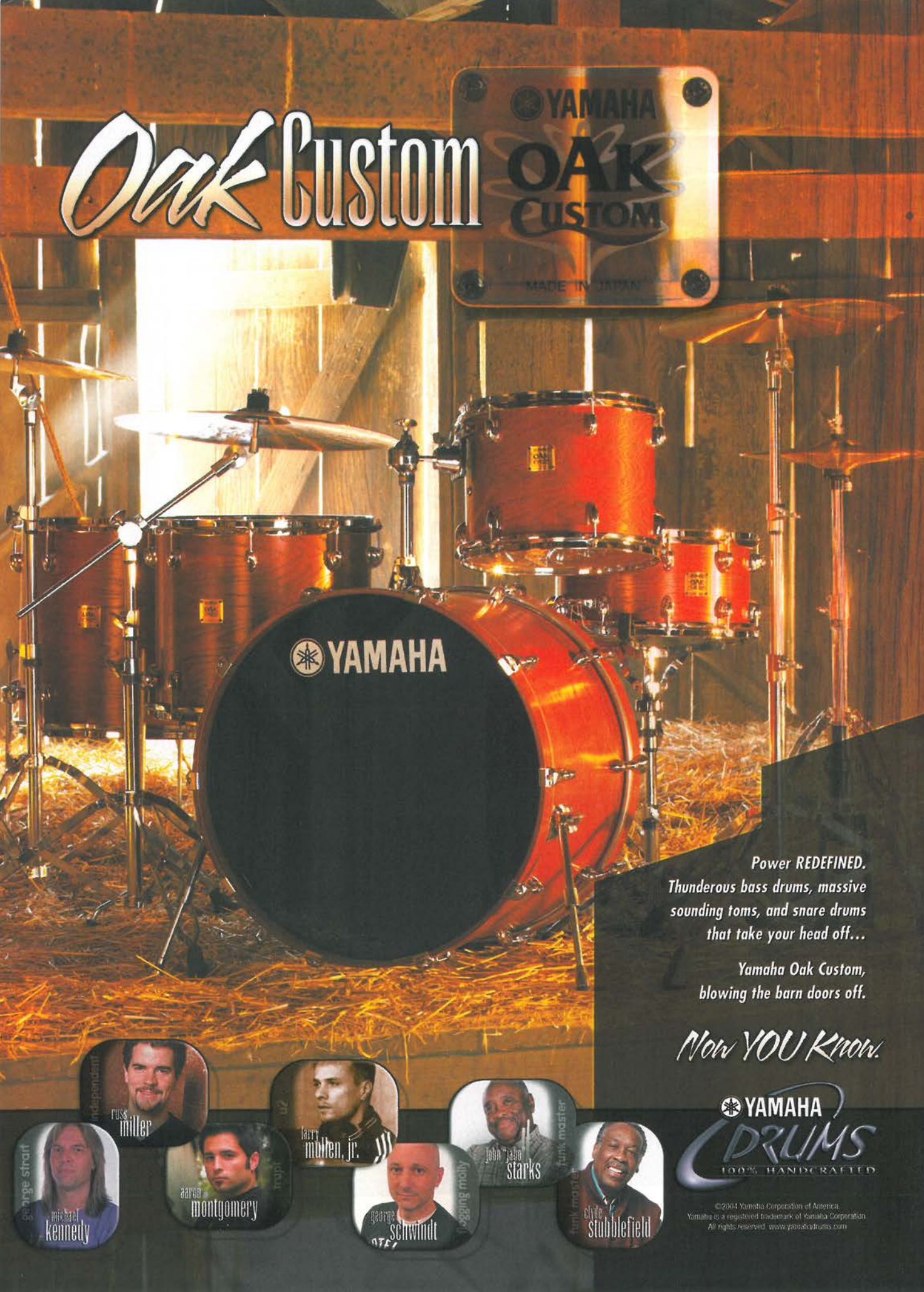
Yamaha craftsmen were the first to utilize the same lacquering and buffing techniques made famous on its world renowned pianos.



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The Strokes' Fabrizio

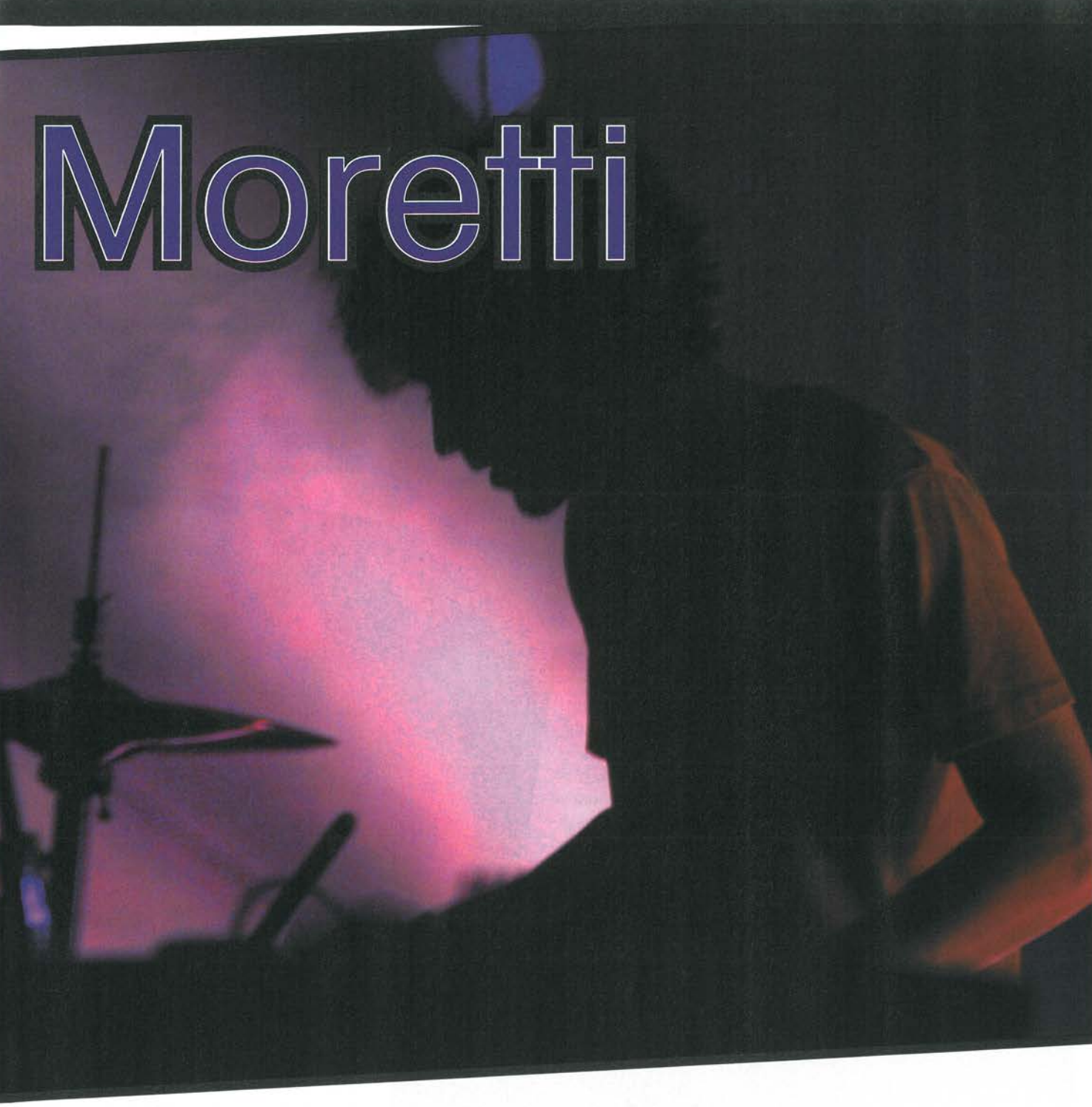
Sculpting Rock 'N' Roll

Watch twenty-three-year-old Fabrizio Moretti in action with The Strokes, and you'll see an elegant simplicity, an economy of motion, and an almost machine-like precision. It's no surprise to learn that in addition to studying music, he attended art school for sculpture, where he built elegant constructions out of discarded pieces of metal, crafting robotic figures that mimicked basic human movements.

"It was all about communications," Moretti says. "I remember one that was a sort of noisemaking machine, with an arm that bounced back on a metal plate." That sounds like exactly the sort of sculpture that a drummer *would* make. "Yeah, I guess it does," he says, laughing.

Raised in midtown Manhattan, where neighbors tend to frown upon aspiring drummers, Moretti spent his

Story by Jim DeRogatis • Photos by Paul La Raia



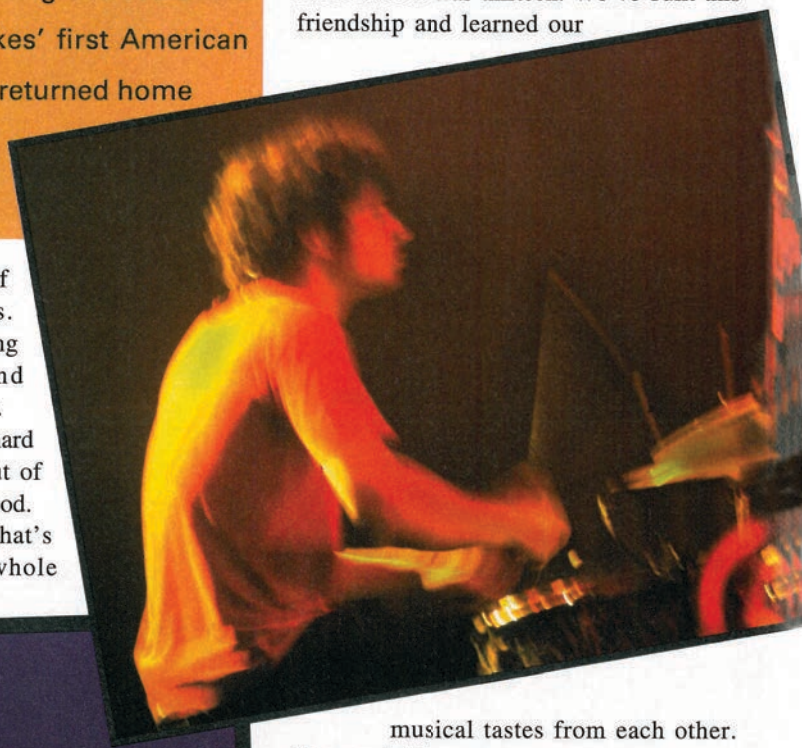
early years banging away in a soundproofed closet. "I padded the walls, I padded the drums, I padded *everything*," he says. "My mom was horrified, and so were the neighbors."

The Strokes are Moretti's first band. He has known singer Julian Casablancas and guitarist Nick Valensi since their days together at Dwight High School. They knocked the rock world on its ear in 2001 with their RCA debut, *Is This It*. Critics hailed the group's mix of Velvet Underground drones, hyper-rhythmic guitars, undeniable hooks—and a killer backbeat. The Strokes were branded as the standard bearers of a new scene that represented the biggest burst of energy in the Big Apple since the mid-'70s uprising at C.B.G.B.: Here was "the new wave of new wave."

Now the group (which is completed by guitarist Albert Hammond Jr. and bassist Nikolai Fraiture) is back with an equally strong second album, *Room On Fire*, which builds on the basic sound by incorporating diverse influences ranging from '50s doo-wop to dub reggae. It stands as another collection of perfectly crafted rock songs, with every interlocking part a paradigm of tuneful minimalism.

Moretti clearly has a lot to be proud of in his musical career, and his personal life is going just as well: He's dating actress Drew Barrymore. *MD* spoke with him after The Strokes' first American tour in support of *Room On Fire*, when the band returned home to New York to perform a weekly residency on *The Conan O'Brien Show*.

MD: So you've been performing every Tuesday for a month on *The Conan O'Brien Show*. Do you like playing on TV?
Fab: To be honest with you, I've never done anything that's more nerve-wracking. It's like a show—you get the same kind of nervousness that you do when you're about to go onstage. But the problem is that it's only one song and you're not able to get into it, plus you know that it's going to be projected into millions of people's homes. There's something very freaky and ghostlike about it.
MD: It must be hard to come right out of the box and be good.
Fab: Exactly. That's why there's a whole lot of jumping about backstage and a lot of yelling right before we go on.
MD: How did you feel the initial US tour went?
Fab: It went really well. It was cool, because we sort of had to prove ourselves a little bit, like we did in the beginning. It felt like we were almost a different band, coming back on the second record.
MD: When I saw you in Chicago, I thought you played really well. It never ceases to amaze me how tight the group is.
Fab: I should start out by saying we're all really close friends. We don't have any egos to climb over. I've known Julian and Nick since I was thirteen. We've built this friendship and learned our musical tastes from each other. You can't hide anything from a friendship like that. You kind of step into the situation showing your cards. In my case, it's hard to be like a simple drummer who doesn't play all over the place. But there's something soothing about having my friends all around me, egging me on to do certain parts as we're arranging the songs.
MD: It seems as if everyone in The Strokes listens intensely to one another. Each part is so wonderfully crafted and everything fits together so meticulously. Do you really put each song under the microscope?
Fab: Oh yeah, absolutely, for hours and hours. It's similar to a machine in that every cog has its moments of up and down. When one part of the machine is at its low-



est point of rotation, the other part is at its highest, and that's the only way that the machine works. It's just like any other art form, like when you paint something or build a sculpture and it finally clicks and you can't put another stroke to it—no pun intended. You feel that sense of satisfaction that it's finally finished. And it might seem finished for the longest time, but something might be missing, as small as one crash.

MD: When we're talking about something specific in the drum part—like dropping out of a 16th-note ride and going to flams on the snare—is that something where Julian says, "I want you to do this"? Or will you try different things and inject them into a song?

Fab: He's very specific about how he wants a song to come out. But what's beautiful about the way Julian works is that he's open to anything. I don't know if you were talking about the song "The Way It Is," when I go from the ride to flams on the snare, but stuff like that comes about from playing the part over and over again and trying a whole bunch of different things. Sometimes it comes from someone describing a mood that they want to set, and sometimes it just comes as a fluke. But a lot of the times, it's just a certain amount of discipline, playing the song over and over again—or just playing the *part* over and over again—and thinking of as many things as you possibly can.

MD: So many drummers will just go to the floor tom or the mounted tom and do a quick roll for a transition, but you're very creative about those things. They may be very simple—a flam here, or striking the bell of the cymbal there—but you very rarely do what's expected.

Fab: What I find really interesting about our songs is that one part might sound completely different from another, but they fit together almost in their sort of incongruency. And sometimes it has even more impact if you don't hide that kind of seam with any in-between fills.

MD: Let's go back to the beginning. You studied drumming for two years.

Fab: It was a school called The Turtle Bay Music School. They didn't have a huge drum program, but they had this one teacher, John Thomas, who was spectacular. He was primarily a jazz drummer, but he also played guitar and piano. John was really into all the instruments. He saw the drums as the foundation on which all the other instruments are built, and he sort of instilled that sense in me from the beginning.

Fab's Kit

Drums: Ludwig Classic Maple in black oyster pearl finish

- **A.** 5x14 wood snare
- **B.** 9x13 tom
- **C.** 16x16 floor tom
- **D.** 16x22 bass drum

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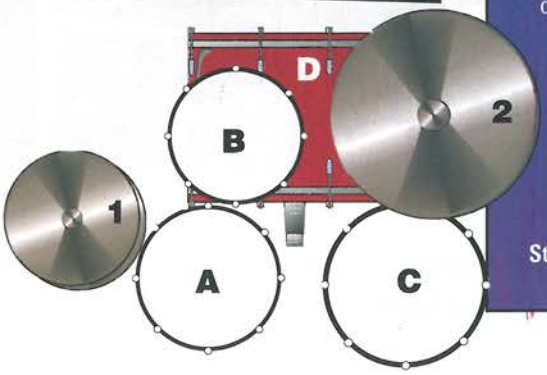
Sticks: Ahead Rock model



MD: At the same time, you were playing in a garage band with Julian and Nick. What was that like?

Fab: The songs were kind of ridiculous and Doors-like. We didn't really know what we were doing, and there were so many parts that were complicated and weird. One day, it just sort of diffused a little bit. All that complicated energy just let itself go, and we started listening to the song a little bit more. I would try certain things, and the other guys would look back at me and go, "That was good, but could you not do so many fills, please?"

MD: You once told me that your two drum heroes were Mitch Mitchell of The Jimi Hendrix Experience and Maureen Tucker of The Velvet Underground. Those are such different drummers that those choices seem a bit schizophrenic.

Fab: Yeah, they're probably the polar opposites of the world! The thing is, I realized something—and Dave Grohl is a sign of this, too. He's a great drummer, but in a band like Nirvana, a three-piece, you kind of have to fill in the sound a little bit more. The drummer has a bit more responsibility. It's necessary to fill in the holes a little bit. Even though Mitch Mitchell was playing with one of the greatest musicians who ever lived, it was still one guitar, bass, and drums. The thing with Moe Tucker was, she had a band with four instruments, and they really weren't a band where anybody stood out more than anyone else. She had that sense of laying back. The polarity of Mitch Mitchell and Moe Tucker offers a pretty good understanding of what a drummer's role is.

MD: I understand you practiced quite a bit with a click track when you were preparing to record *Is This It*, and you worked with one in the studio. Did you do that again for *Room On Fire*?

Fab: Yeah, but it was much less of a struggle this time. It's funny, because a lot of the songs on *Is This It* were done live with the whole band. I find that the more instruments you put in the mix, the harder it is to play with a click. A lot of the songs on this record were done with just bass and drums first. The experience of practicing with a click and practicing with Nikolai a lot between the two records made it a lot easier, so it didn't feel so strict. I didn't feel like I was playing to some machine, whereas it was kind of intimidating on the first record.

MD: But your time seems impeccable.

Fab: Well, thanks, but I used to speed up and slow down when I was younger. It really does get exciting up there. But it's imperative for our songs that the tempo

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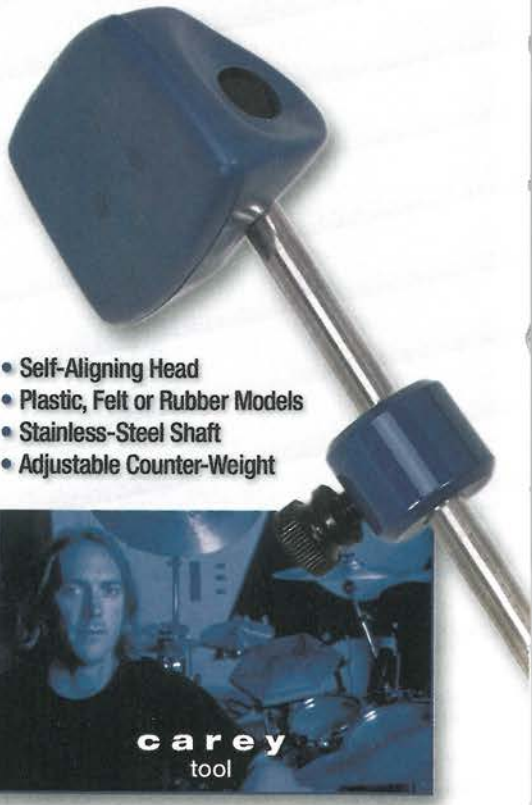

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stays completely steady. The excitement of a Strokes song depends on its seamlessness and on our being a very tight package. We can be lenient toward the guitars a little bit, because they can kind of muck up and not really be noticed that much. But if the bass and drums fall out, then it's all over.

MD: How much angst was there in recording this album? You worked for a while with Nigel Godrich, Radiohead's producer, before returning to Gordon Raphael, who did the first record.

Fab: There was a point even before we started recording with Nigel where we said, "This has to be perfect; we have to make a record that's better than the first one." That was scary, but it had nothing to do with external pressures.

Part of being really objective about your trade, your music, or your art is recognizing that you might not know everything about it. So you have to go and try many different things. We were open to working with a different producer and we were excited about it. But both Nigel and The Strokes knew that this was going to be a trial situation. So we went into the studio, and we played a hell of a lot of poker, but it just didn't pan out—not because it was bad, but because it just didn't pan out. Nigel has a very distinct view of what he wants, but it doesn't necessarily coincide with what we want right now.

MD: Let me ask you a couple of questions outside the drumming world. I saw two great cover illustrations you did for the Chicago literary magazine *Broken Wrist Project*. You studied as a visual artist as well, right?

Fab: Yeah, I went to school for sculpture. You'd be surprised how much that kind of understanding of the artistic side of things gives you a sense of discipline and heightens your musical nature. When I travel, I keep a sketch book with me, and the ideas still come. I have faith that once we're done with a long tour, I'll have time to devote to sculpture again. It would be much harder to be a sculptor if I was a businessman.

MD: It strikes me that you approach the drums as a sculptor: You're always thinking about perfecting your skills and honing the parts.

Fab: Exactly. One thing that pissed me off when I was at art school was that a lot of students came in with below-par skills but thought they were "artists." The teachers would try to entice them to do things a little bit differently, and they'd be like, "Ah, forget you, I'm an artist. I know what I'm doing!" You really can't think that way if you want to master what you're doing, because you'll never understand that there's so much more for you to learn. You've got to keep working, you've got to keep practicing—whether it's drawing, sketching, or playing rudiments.

MD: So do you have a practice regimen, where you work on things like rudiments on a regular basis?

Fab: Oh, absolutely. We have a rehearsal studio, and I try to go there with Nikolai as much as I possibly can. In my case, it's really nice to play along with someone else, to have that balance of notes versus rhythm. But when I'm alone, it's just rudiments on the snare, and then just trying to listen to music like Jimmy Cliff's "The Harder They Come" and figuring out that opening drum fill, or listening to other bands I like and trying to figure out their music.

MD: I was impressed by some of the reggae touches on the new album.

Fab: It's funny, because I realized that trying to master the metronome actually helps you fall back on the beat like a reggae guy.

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MD: This is *Modern Drummer* and not *People*, but I feel compelled to ask you this question because it must be such a strange experience for you. I was in an airplane the other day, and my wife was reading a glossy women's mag, and the person next to me was reading a Hollywood tabloid, and both of them opened to a picture of you and Drew Barrymore. And I thought, That is so bizarre. What is The Strokes' drummer doing in these publications? Is all of that a distraction to the music?

Fab: I'll tell you one thing I'm very proud of: The fact that our love, our relationship, has no influence on each other's art. If anything, it's a good influence. You know what I mean? As for the tabloids and all that b.s., they're only worth as much as you invest in them. After all, they're just magazines, and you don't have to pick one up and read it.

Our life is very normal. Drew is just someone I've fallen in love with. She's so supportive and beautiful. I can see her from here, opening up boxes, and she's just the cutest thing that ever lived. I have to stress that all the tabloid b.s. makes no difference to us, as long as we make sure not to let it exist in our world.

MD: Back to drumming, you favor a very small kit—one mounted tom, one floor tom, one cymbal—and I know you love the new Ludwig maple sets that are patterned on the old '60s models.

Fab: Ludwig is rediscovering themselves, and it's such a beautiful name; it's one of the pillars of rock 'n' roll history. I don't like necessarily going with the flow, I just like to find that one instrument that treats you well and you can call it a girl's name—you can name it Molly or something like that and have your allegiance to her. The Ludwig maples just sound great, and they have their own personality. I've played other brands that only have one sound. You have to use one kit for one song and another kit for another song. But the Ludwig is so versatile, it's ridiculous.

MD: Are you as meticulous about tuning as you are about crafting your parts?

Fab: Oh, absolutely. And so are the rest of the boys. I have to stress the fact that each of us has as much influence on every other instrument as we do on our own, especially while we're recording, when we're all stuck together in one room. You have to give your opinion, because you don't want the sounds to be presented incorrectly. The sound of any instrument is like the dress of a beautiful girl, you know? A beautiful girl can look amazing naked, but if you throw a plastic bag around her and have her wear a straw hat, you might not see her in her full beauty.

Anyway, I have an endorsement with Ludwig, and I'm working with this guy at the company, Todd Trent, who is one of the nicest guys I've met. He told me something that was really beautiful and kind of gave me a level head about things. He said, "We'll be there with you at the highs, and we'll be there with you at the lows. When you're with Ludwig, you're with family." It kind of made me realize, I'll have highs, and I'll have lows, but as long as I keep drumming, keep on doing music with my buddies, and love what I do and believe in it, everything will be okay.

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B

Buddy Harman

The Forefather Of Country Drumming

Story by Robyn Flans • Photos by Rick Malkin

Very few drummers can say they started a style of drumming. Buddy Harman is the forefather of country music drumming. He's the guy who first put drumset on a country recording. (Before him, only snare drums were used.) Harman gave the instrument acceptability in Nashville. He's also credited for creating the country shuffle, first used with Ray Price.

Like all drummers who came up prior to the advent of country or rock drumming, Harman grew up on jazz and big band. Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich were his two main influences. His parents were also very influential on the young drummer, as they were both in a band. But after hearing Tommy Dorsey's "Not So Quiet Please" with Rich and "Lover" with Krupa, Harman *knew* he wanted to be a drummer.

After high school, Harman enlisted in the Navy, where he played drums. He then attended the Roy Knapp School of Percussion in Chicago for three years. In 1952, Harman settled in Nashville, where he had grown up, and learned the ropes on the road with some nondescript bands, playing dives and strip clubs. Eventually, when the young drummer began getting recording calls, it was "just to fatten up the rhythm sound," he says. "They didn't want anybody to know it was a drum."

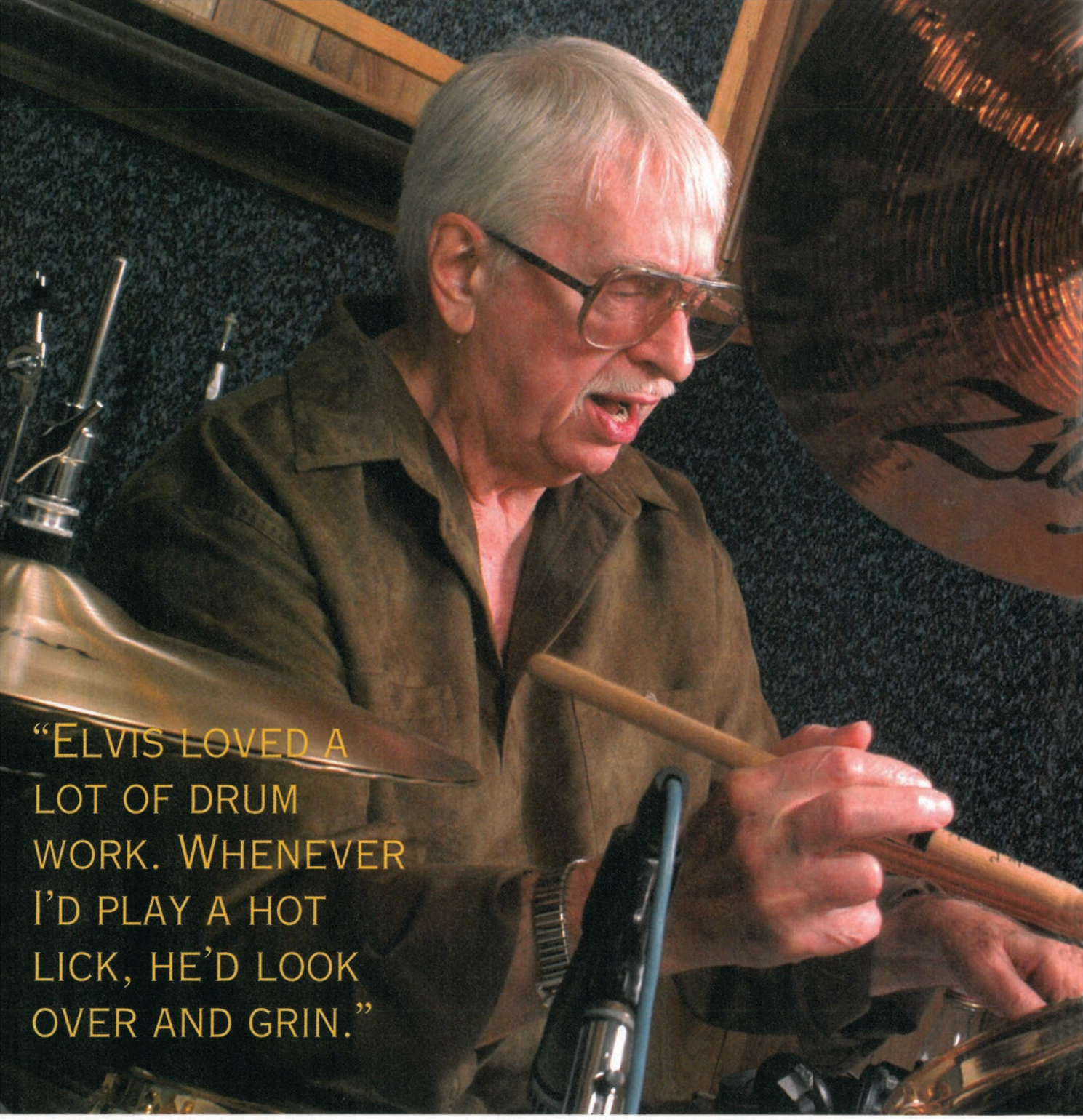
From there Harman became Nashville's first bonafide studio drummer. His list of credits is unbelievable. He is said to have recorded over 18,000 songs. That's Harman on such classics as Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman" and "Cryin'," The Everly Brothers' "Cathy's Clown," "Wake Up Little Susie," and "Bye Bye Love," Patsy Cline's "Crazy" and "Walkin' After Midnight," Ray Stevens' "Ahab The Arab," "Last Date" by Floyd Cramer, and "King Of The Road" by Roger Miller, not to mention his work with Elvis on "His Latest Flame," "Now Or Never," and "You're The Devil In Disguise," Johnny Horton's "The Battle Of New Orleans," and Loretta Lynn's "Coal Miner's Daughter." There were also records with Johnny Cash, Andy Williams, Dolly Parton, Perry Como, Chet Atkins, Conway Twitty, Kenny Rogers, Glen Campbell, Brenda Lee, Tanya Tucker, Charlie Pride, Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Patti Page, Merle Haggard, Wayne Newton, Carl Perkins, Donna Fargo, Ronnie Milsap, Simon & Garfunkel, Tex Ritter, Jimmy Dean, and Barbara Mandrell. Harman's contribution as a pioneer is legendary, and the work he's done is unparalleled.

Credited with helping to create the "Nashville sound," Harman brought the drums to the Grand Ole Opry, won countless awards, and even performed for four US presidents—John F. Kennedy, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and Ronald Reagan. Today, at age seventy-five, Harman is a walking wealth of history, and although some of the details have faded with time, it's a privilege—and an education—to take a glimpse back with Buddy Harman.

Classic Sessions

Here are just a few of the artists Buddy Harman has worked with. To call his résumé impressive would be quite an understatement.

Chet Atkins
Johnny Cash
Patsy Cline
The Everly Brothers
Tom T. Hall
Waylon Jennings
George Jones
k.d. lang
Jerry Lee Lewis
Gordon Lightfoot
Loretta Lynn
Reba McEntire
Roger Miller
Willie Nelson
Roy Orbison
Dolly Parton
Carl Perkins
Elvis Presley
Charley Pride
Kenny Rogers
Simon & Garfunkel
The Statler Brothers
Conway Twitty
Doc Watson



MD: Let's talk about cutting "Crazy" with Patsy Cline.

Buddy: It was at producer Owen Bradley's studio. Back in those days, everything you heard on the record was recorded in the studio at the same time—strings, horns, voices—not like these days, when things are done in pieces and overdubs.

MD: Did Bradley give you direction on how he wanted it?

Buddy: He had a lot of those things arranged. He had an arranger in there conducting. We'd run it down and rehearse it, and if there was something he heard that he didn't want to do, he'd change it.

MD: So it was written out?

Buddy: A lot of it was. They didn't write out the drum part, though. They just had chord charts, string and horn parts—things like that. They always left the drums up to me, to play whatever I felt would fit. I always appreciated their confidence in me.

MD: Do you remember what you were thinking as that particular song with Patsy was going down? "Wow"?

Buddy: Exactly—Wow! A lot of things I recorded through the years I thought, Man, this is too much. This is great! That was one of those moments. What a great song and what a great singer.

MD: Do you recall if you had to cut it many times?

Buddy: We had such a good group, we

didn't have to do a lot of takes on anything. Back then, they didn't have 64 or 132 tracks or whatever they have today, and they couldn't punch in like they can now. In the early days, if somebody missed it, *everybody* had to go back in and do it again. So we were very careful. Once we had the feel—which is what they were most interested in—that was the take. Sometimes they'd keep a track with a small mistake if the feel was there.

MD: What prepared you to be this kind of precise, consistent studio player?

Buddy: I enjoyed it so much that I wanted to be really good at it. But when I first started playing drums, I didn't start out as a country drummer.

MD: You were influenced by jazz. How did that cross over to what you ended up doing?

Buddy's Drums

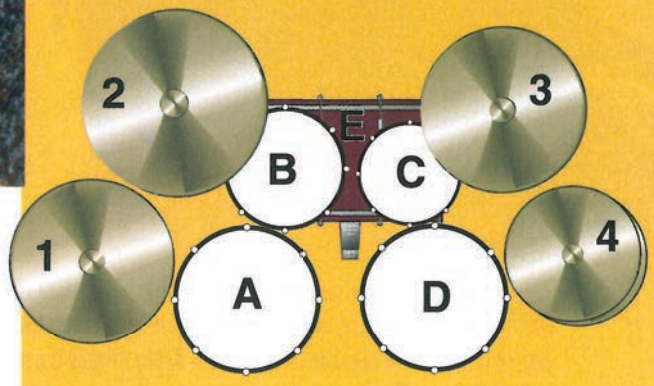
Drums: Pearl Masters Custom (4-ply maple shells) in purple mist finish with gold hardware
A. 14x14 floor tom
B. 8x12 tom
C. 8x10 tom
D. 5½x14 snare
E. 14x20 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian
1. 17" A Custom crash
2. 20" A Rock ride (or 21" A Sweet)
3. 18" A medium-thin crash with rivets (or K Custom)
4. 14" Mastersound hi-hats

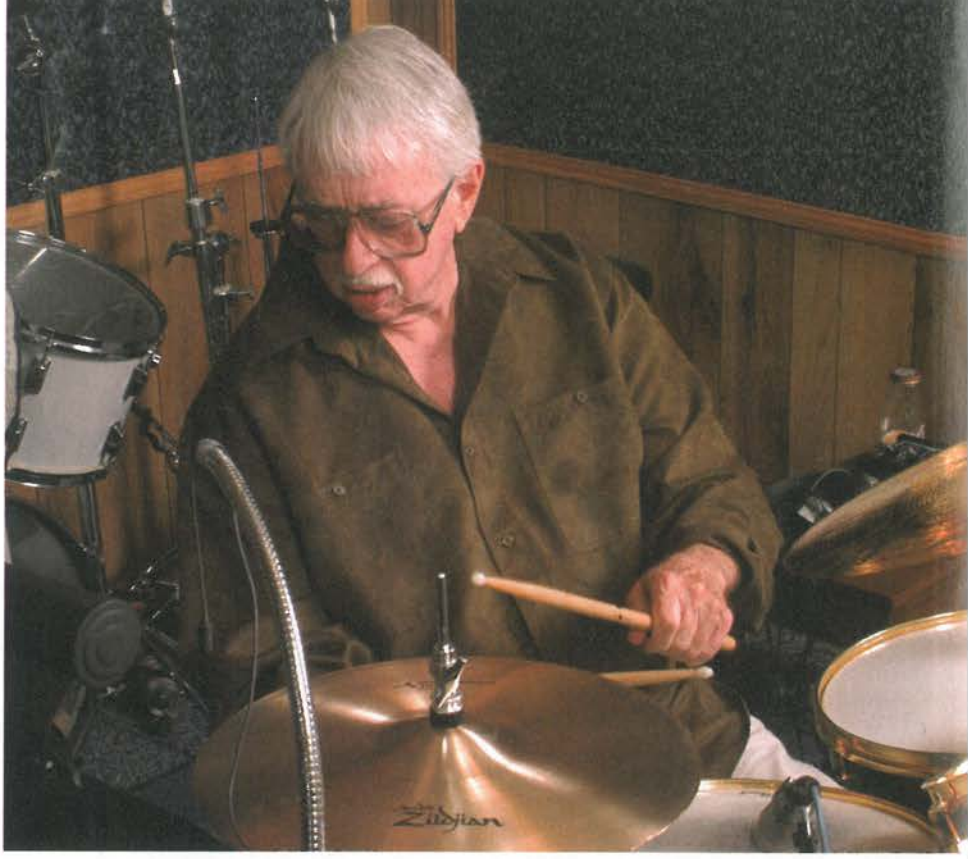
Hardware: All Pearl, including an Eliminator bass drum pedal

Heads: Remo coated Ambassador on snare batter, Ambassador on snare side, coated Emperors on tom batters with coated Ambassadors on bottoms, PowerStroke 3 on bass drum (small blanket for muffling)

Sticks: Pro-Mark 5A (Japanese white oak, nylon tip)



Buddy Harman



Buddy: It made me a disciplined player. I played in dance bands, combos—all kinds of stuff. Then all of a sudden I got kind of known around Nashville. Before that I went to a drum school in Chicago, which is where I met Hal Blaine, and we became great friends. But eventually a guy decided to use me on a country date back in the '50s. He said, "Just bring a snare drum and brushes. We don't need a whole set." So I did, and it was very interesting. I was able to do it and not overplay. It went over real good. It gave them a little different sound that they weren't used to hearing, a fatter rhythm sound, and it caught on. More and more people in the country recording industry heard it and thought, We like this sound, let's go for it.

Up to then, they had been using what they called a dead-string guitar sound. They'd place paper in between the strings of a rhythm guitar so it didn't have any tone, but it made a slapping sound when they ran across the strings with a pick. When I started playing snare drum on sessions, it was a much better rhythm sound and much stronger. They weren't used to it, but they *got* used to it pretty quickly. It caught on.

MD: Do you remember the first producer who asked you to bring your whole drumset?

Buddy: No, actually. We sort of eased into that as time went on. There was a Gospel singer named Martha Carson who wanted a lot more rock and heavier drums. I took a snare to her sessions. Ray

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Price also wanted drums, so we started using a snare with him. He did a lot of shuffle things. Then later on came Carl Smith, the western swinger, and I think I started using a bass drum with him as well as a snare. I still didn't take any toms, but we eased into it, one piece at a time.

MD: By the time you recorded "Crazy," what were you playing?

Buddy: I think I was playing a full set by then. Owen Bradley had worked with dance bands and things like that, so he knew what it was like to hear a full set of drums in the music. And you can use a full set without beating the crap out of the toms. Sometimes a drummer gets in the studio and doesn't know what to do, so he beats everything. But that's not the way to go about it. You have to learn simplicity and how to work your way into things. Later on, the music called for more drumming, but in the early years, it didn't call for all of that.

MD: It took a lot of restraint for a drummer to do that in Nashville's early days.

Buddy: Exactly, but that's what they liked about my playing. I could restrain it and give them what they wanted. It got me a lot of work. Then, along came The Everly Brothers and Roy Orbison.

MD: What do you remember about the Everly Brothers recordings?

Buddy: I just used brushes on a snare drum for "Bye Bye Love" and "Wake Up Little Susie." Those were the first songs I did with them. I remember how fascinated I was with how close their harmonies were and what good-looking kids they were. Chet Atkins was producing them, and I had a lot to learn back in those days. I didn't really know what was "commercial" and what wasn't. All I knew was that I had to put down what I felt would fit their arrangement. Evidently it worked.

MD: How did you hear the song originally?

Buddy: They played the guitar and sang the tune, and we all listened and then started running it down with what we thought would fit. There wasn't a big band on that session, just a few pieces. The bass fiddle was on one side of the mic' and the snare drum was on the other. Later on, when we started to use a full kit, they started to put more mic's on the drums.

MD: How do you feel when you hear those songs today?

Buddy: I feel that they sound very mod-

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Buddy Harman

ern and not dated at all. I've been all over the world, and people always ask me about that drum on "Cathy's Clown." They ask me whose idea it was and how I thought of it.

MD: And what are the answers?

Buddy: The answer is I just tried stuff that I thought would be different, and the producers left it on there.

MD: Can you describe what you did?

Buddy: That was a little four-stroke ruff on the second and fourth beats. I changed the whole beat in the chorus, and then I went back to the original part on the verses. It just felt like it needed something different. They must have liked it, because they didn't change it. The Everlys had a habit of wanting to change this and that, but they left that alone.

MD: Roger Miller's "King Of The Road" is another classic. Do you remember that session?

Buddy: Yep. Mr. Miller was a funny man. He kept us laughing through the whole album. We also recorded "Dang Me" and "Chug A Lug," which were hugely successful songs.

MD: By then you were playing the whole kit.

Buddy: Oh yeah. I was using the whole kit back in the late '50s, when Roy Orbison and Elvis came along.

MD: Elvis Presley's "Little Sister" was a rockin' song. You came from Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich, so where did that rock feel come from?

Buddy: I listened a lot and tried to come up with things that I thought would fit the arrangement. I wasn't letting my jazz influences take over what I was doing commercially. I was trying to play things that were right for the tune.

MD: What's unique about speaking with you is that drums in Nashville didn't exist before you. You literally invented the role.

Buddy: I tried to. I created the 4/4-shuffle beat on the drums with Ray Price. There were shuffle beats before with dance bands, but it was a whole different feel. We made a country shuffle out of it, laying a good, heavy 2 and 4 backbeat in the middle of all that. It changed the whole beat around.

MD: Do you remember how you came up with that?

Buddy: I don't remember which session it was, but it was with Ray Price. The piano player was doing a shuffle thing and the bass player was playing a 4/4, so I just laid a backbeat right in the middle of all of it, with a heavy stick. At first I was doing a brush/stick beat—the brush doing the shuffle and the stick doing the backbeat—and it fit so well. The producer said, "Don't change a thing. We've got a beat."

You'd be surprised how many drummers can't feel that beat, though. Some drummers want to play straight 8ths against it. They don't get that dotted feel. And they don't play the same accent in the pattern. You have to accent it a certain way with the keyboard, bass, and drums.

MD: How can somebody practice that?

Buddy: Listen to Ray Price records. Pig Robbins, the piano player, was a great shuffler. When you'd get him on there with Bob Moore on bass...well, that was a great rhythm section.

MD: Do you remember being in Elvis's presence the first time and what that was like?

Buddy: I was very much in awe. I'd heard about him and knew he was quite a charismatic person. To be honest, at first I was kind of scared to say anything to him. But he was super nice to me the whole time I worked with him.

MD: What were you first called to do with Elvis?

Buddy: The first thing was called "Stuck On You," when he first went with RCA after leaving Sun Records.

MD: Were you given direction?

Buddy: They'd put a demo on, we would listen to it, and then Elvis would decide if he wanted to do the song or not. Everyone would get ideas from the demo, and then we'd start running it down. We didn't have arrangements on his sessions. Elvis was pretty much content to let it go like the demo, or close to it. The demos were pretty good, though. They weren't just a guitar and voice. There would be a full band on them, so it was fairly easy to do his stuff. We could add or take away things, and usually nobody ever said anything. Elvis sang his songs and let us do our thing. He loved a lot of drum work, though. Whenever I'd play a hot lick, he'd look over and grin.

MD: What about Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman"?

Buddy: That was a killer.

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MD: That drum intro defines the song. How did that come about?

Buddy: We had about five guitar players playing the same lick, the sax was playing the same lick, *everybody* was playing that lick. Every time I did a session with Roy, he would bring his guitar in front of the drum booth, play something, and say, "What will go with this?" On "Pretty Woman," he did the same thing. He started stroking the guitar in 4/4 and asked what would go with that. I said, "You've got it right there, those straight quarters *right there*." I added the 8th notes on the cymbal, and it all worked together perfectly. Roy always trusted what I thought would fit. I really appreciated that.

MD: What about working with Brenda Lee?

Buddy: She's a sweetheart. We did so many songs with her—"I'm Sorry," "Sweet Nothin's," "Coming On Strong," "Too Many Rivers," "Break It To Me Gently," and "Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree." That one has been in a lot of movies, too.

MD: Can you recall cutting with her?

Buddy: She sang so good. I loved her recitation of "I'm Sorry."

MD: The talent of the artist must really motivate you and move you to creative places.

Buddy: If you've got somebody who sings like that, you've got to put out.

MD: Do you have any bad memories?

Buddy: I would say ninety-nine percent was great. Over the years there were only a few artists that were a pain in the butt to work with.

MD: What would make them a pain in the butt?

Buddy: Their attitude. Maybe they weren't really nice people. But we'd always do our job and try to help them out, and it would turn out okay.

MD: Tell us about cutting "The Battle Of New Orleans."

Buddy: That was a lot of fun. Johnny Horton was a great little artist, but bless his heart, he got killed in a car wreck. We were all torn up about that. But I remember recording that tune. It was a Columbia session with Don Law producing, and Harold Bradley did the banjo part. It was different. I liked doing something a little bit out of the ordinary. Johnny's stuff was kind of "military" sounding. He said something to me about it being a march thing, so that's what I did. Several drummers have told me through the years that it was that track that made them want to start playing drums.

MD: Johnny Cash's "Ring Of Fire." What was it like being in the studio with Cash, and how was that song presented to you?

Buddy: I believe we had arrangements on that one, because there were horns. We did a sort of Mexican-type beat on that. There were two horns doing the melody while Johnny sang, and again, it was something different for that time.

MD: Many of these artists changed popular music in major ways.

Buddy: I was there at the right time with the right stuff, I guess. I really had a fun career. I've done some things just for the fun of it. I went on the road with Jerry Lee Lewis in 1983 through '86. That was pretty wild.

MD: What was it like when he'd hop up on his piano?

Buddy: He's a great showman. I definitely had to play louder and harder with him than in the studio. He wanted me to play hard, and I wasn't used to hitting that hard. But it was a great setup. We traveled everywhere in a Lear jet. I never had to carry a drum. I'd get to the gig and the drums would all be set up.

MD: You were also the drummer at the Grand Ole Opry.

Buddy: I was the first staff drummer at the Opry, in 1959 and '60. I got so busy in the studios that I had to give it up. But later on, in the late '80s, I came back and worked there until 2000.

MD: What have you been up to recently?

Buddy: I just did some recording with Ray Price, and it's some killer stuff. He's back to his good ol' shuffle thing. I did something with Johnny Bush in April, and even an Elvis impersonator a few months ago. And last August I played at the twenty-fifth-anniversary commemoration of Elvis's death. They had several bands come down to perform—his original recording band and his road band. I'm enjoying my retirement, but I still do an occasional gig.

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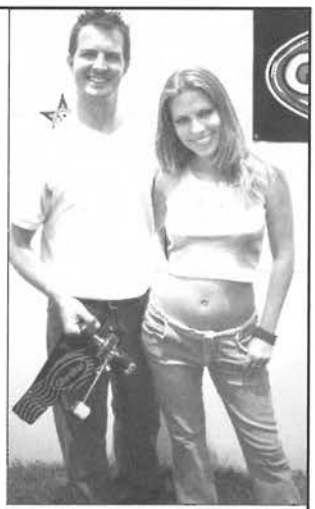

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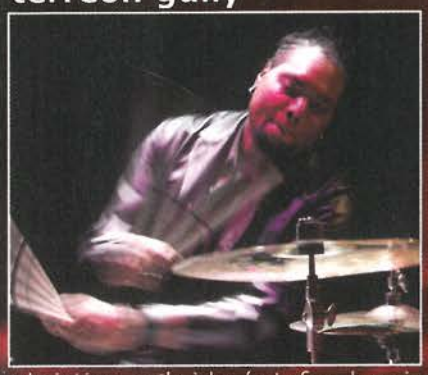

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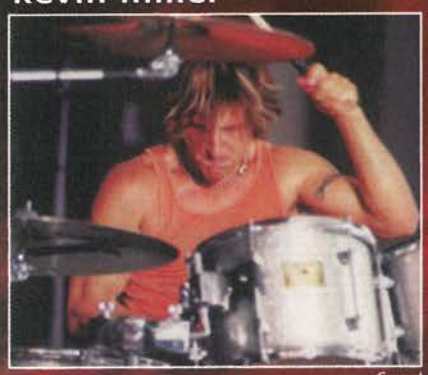

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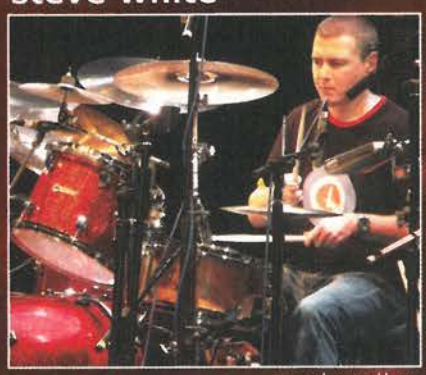

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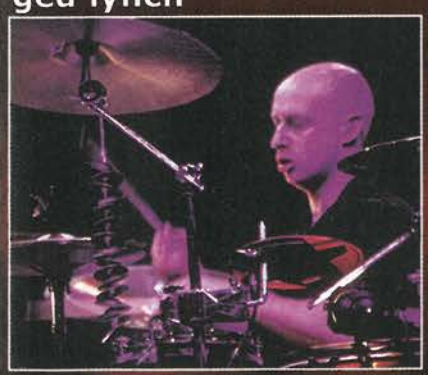

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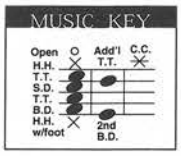
How'd They Do That?

Metal Mysteries

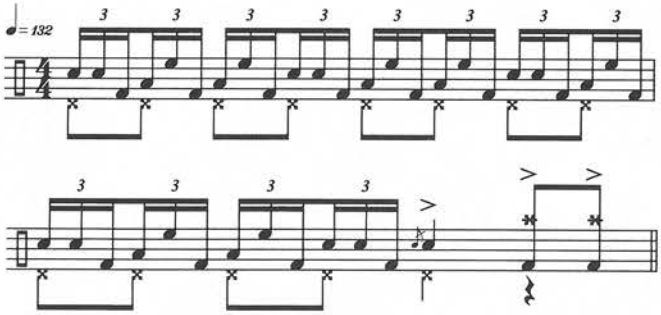
by Ed Breckenfeld



When it comes to challenging drum licks, hard rock and metal drummers hold a special place. In this all-request installment of "How'd They Do That?" we'll be looking at some of the heaviest fills and beats that have messed with the minds of *Modern Drummer*'s metal-fan readership. So break out the double bass drums and flip your sticks butt-end forward, because here we go!

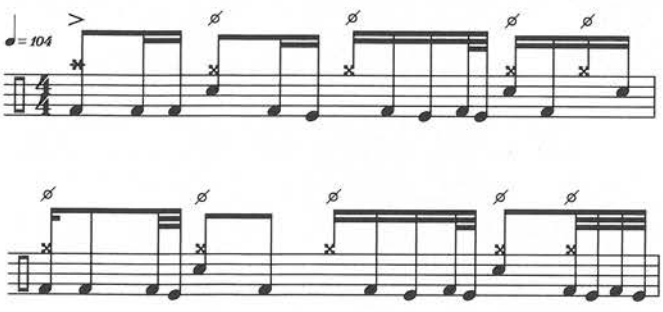
"Over The Mountain"
Ozzy Osbourne's *Diary Of A Madman*

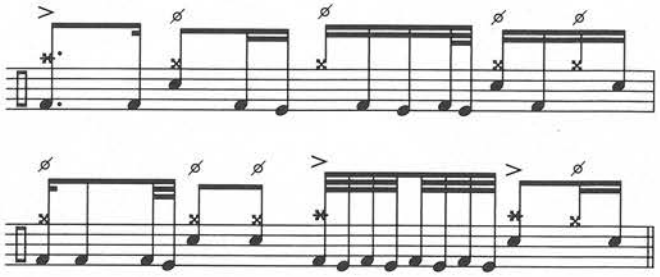
Ozzy's second solo album explodes with this famous Tommy Aldridge opening drum fill. On first listen, one might assume that this is double bass–driven. Tommy's left foot hi-hat 8th notes, however, are clearly presented in this John Bonham-style triplet lick. (Requested by Mike J.)



Korn's "Shoots And Ladders"

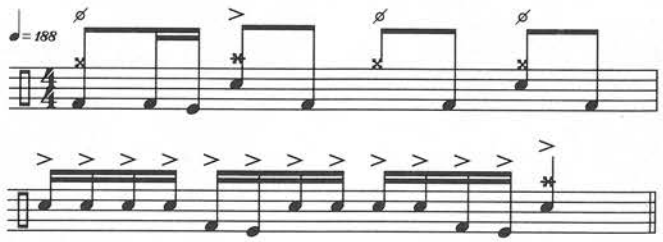
This sequence from Korn's self-titled debut album rhythmically showcases the band's metal/rap hybrid. Drummer David Silveria spices his heavy funk groove with 32nd-note double kick flourishes, while Jonathan Davis belts out a twisted nursery rhyme rap. The combination is jarring and completely effective. (Thanks to Mike V. for suggesting this one.)





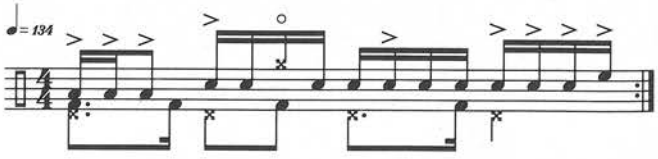
"F*ing Hostile"**
Pantera's *Vulgar Display Of Power*

Vinnie Paul's drumming on Pantera's pinnacle album sounds like the rattle of automatic weapon fire, underscoring the band's full-out sonic assault. Here's his classic snare/double-kick fill that leads into the second verse of this blazing track. (Suggested by James B.)



"Jesus Christ Pose"
Soundgarden's *Badmotorfinger*

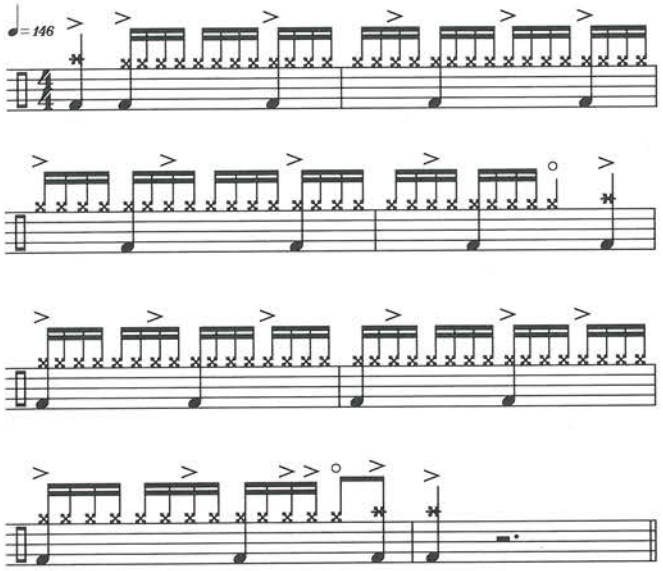
Matt Cameron is no stranger to our "How'd They Do That?" series. Here's another uniquely individual groove from his Soundgarden days. We've separated the hand pattern from the feet for clarity. Playing this high-energy beat for the six-minute length of this track is truly a workout! (Thanks to Devin B. for this request.)



"Wasted Years"
Iron Maiden's *Somewhere In Time*

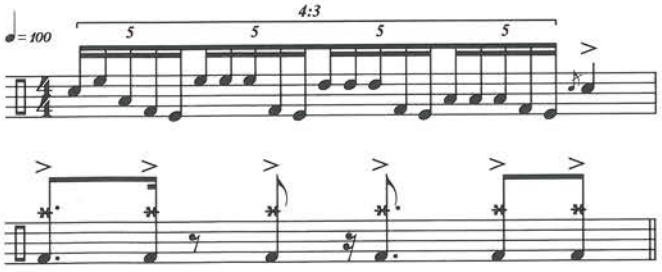
The intro beat to this Iron Maiden hit contains a bit of timing trickery from Nicko McBrain. While the accents in his two-handed

16th-note hi-hat pattern continue to follow a guitar riff, Nicko subtly shifts his kick pattern from the second and fourth beats in the measure to the first and third beats, providing a little misdirection at the end of the intro. The impact of the accents adds a splashy, semi-open sound to the hi-hats. (Andy K. asked for help on this one.)



"Skin O' My Teeth"
Megadeth's *Countdown To Extinction*

Here's another album-opening fiery fill, this time from classic-thrashers Megadeth. Drummer Nick Menza cleverly uses quintuplets to set up the intro guitar riff. To get the timing of this lick, match Menza's four quintuplets to the rhythm of the first four accents in the second measure. (This one's for Jon G.)



If you have a request for a future "How'd They Do That?" article, you can contact Ed Breckenfeld at www.edbreckenfeld.com.

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Improv Playhouse 3

Tune Time

by Matt Wilson

I want to relay a story about Lester "Prez" Young, the legendary jazz tenor saxophonist and charismatic hipster. A cocky young saxophonist, tenor in hand, approached Prez aboard a tour bus. He confidently announced, "Prez, check me out!" and went on to blow a blazing display of impressive technical prowess. Prez, in his inimitable fashion, sat back and calmly remarked, "Yeah man, but can you sing me a song?"

Think about that for a few moments. What was the master so eloquently relaying to the young warrior?

Technical facility is an essential component of playing a musical instrument. Facility allows us to play music *with* our instrument and produce the sound that we desire. This sound then allows us to say, or sing, through our instrument what we intend to express.

But sometimes we can become obsessed with mechanics, and the essence of music is overlooked. When this happens, we need to refocus our attention on "what" is being expressed rather than "how" it's being expressed.

Compare Dennis Chambers to Paul Motian. Both are amazing musicians. They express themselves with a completely different technical methodology. Their facility serves their musical intention, not the other way around. What they're able to say through the drumset is remarkable. What they contribute to the musical settings in which they're involved is inspirational. That's why people love to play with them. Realize that, through their own personal journeys, they have developed an approach that is uniquely theirs.

Oftentimes we musicians become obsessed with our favorite players' abilities. We study them for how they do something, yet lose sight of why their playing speaks to us on an emotional level. Do yourself a favor and listen to a recording or attend a concert strictly as a civilian. Don't analyze and scrutinize. Just sit back and enjoy it!

As you play, welcome that same feeling. Play with equal joy and enthusiasm for what you can and cannot do. This will allow the "what" to emerge more freely. Remember, you can only be yourself. Don't feel inferior if, for example, you're unable to play as fast as someone you admire. Turn that around and make the most with what you *can* do. That's what Miles Davis did when he replaced Dizzy Gillespie in Charlie Parker's band.

Do yourself a favor and listen to a recording or attend a concert strictly as a civilian. Don't analyze and scrutinize. Just sit back and enjoy it!

So with all of that said, let's start singing! Sit down at your drums, greet them, and take a few deep breaths. Now I want you to improvise a song on the drumset using only whole notes. As you play each area of your set, hear and feel the complete whole note. Play with your eyes open and shut. Direct your hearing towards the sound made when the sound source is struck. Then direct your hearing to the resonance of the sound.

You're probably sitting there asking yourself, "Whole notes? Ugh! This Wilson dude is insane. Nobody is gonna ever want to hear me play just *whole notes*." Alright, maybe you're right. Do you know what I want you to do next? Play as fast and loud as you can around the drums for about two minutes. Go berserk, rattle the windows, and wake the neighbors. Wear down them 5As. Faster! Louder! Go! Go! Go!

After you've completed your aerobic workout, pause for a few seconds. It felt great, didn't it? We all get a buzz by successfully executing a physically demanding fill or lick; I know I do. I think this is true of all instruments, not just the drums.

Did the two minutes of calamity translate into music? Yes? No? Did you feel connected to the proceedings? Perhaps you can't answer because you were not really aware of what you played. (Hmmmm...very interesting.)

Now take a few deep breaths, and let's return to playing the whole notes. (I don't want to hear any whining!) Smile and allow yourself to enjoy the physical feeling of playing the whole notes. Go! Go! Go!

Play at a variety of tempos. Play with a wide range of dynamics and dynamic contours to create audible architectures. As a challenge, explore variations in the shape of the sound. How would you play the *thickest* whole note on the drumset?

Perhaps try playing all four limbs in unison, and visualize the dimension and depth of your sound. As you continue to play, allow limb combinations on various sound sources to create chords. Melodic and harmonic elements are there for us, just the same as the piano or guitar. Let yourself hear them!

Play the whole notes with a contrasting range of textural descriptions and emotions. Try thick, thin, gritty, smooth, flowing, rigid, relaxed, nervous, serious, goofy, confident, timid, boisterous, weak, elegant, primitive, angry, and happy. Give what you're playing a personality. Bring it to life!

Next, compose on the set with 1) half notes, 2) quarter notes, 3) 8th notes, 4) triplets,

and 5) 16th notes. Combine the note values. And please do not forsake the whole and half notes!

Hear the melody of the rhythms you're playing. I thought that something the phenomenal young Cuban drummer Dafnis Prieto said in a recent *Modern Drummer* interview was enlightening. He was describing his approach to playing a mozambique groove, drawing upon the elements of the percussion parts. "I try to play the rhythms, with those conga and cowbell *melodies* in mind." Start to hear the melodies of your favorite grooves, and *sing* them.

Discover ways to articulate your statements. Play very short notes as well as allowing notes to last as long as they will sound. Muffle or dampen notes, and utilize buzz and dead strokes.

Allow melodic ideas to surface. Repeat them and work with the motifs. Improvise and then return to the theme. Create forms for your songs, complete with introductions and endings. Write or improvise words to your melodies. Compose tunes for your band that are based on melodies you created from the drums. Perhaps you can play the melody and have your bandmates accompany *you*. Hallelujah!

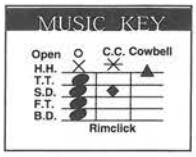
Ask most musicians to play, and they'll play a song. Why shouldn't *we*? Develop a repertoire of your drum songs. Give them titles. Imagine that you're a folk singer telling your story on the drums. You can do it, my friends!

"Sing, sing a song. Make it simple to last your whole life long. Don't worry if it's not good enough for anyone else to hear, just sing, sing a song!" These are the inspirational lyrics from the song "Sing," by Joe Raposo. They sing it often on *Sesame Street,* and The Carpenters had a big hit with it. Check it out!

Matt Wilson currently leads three projects, The Matt Wilson Quartet, Arts & Crafts, and The Carl Sandburg Project. In addition, he is a sideman in several diverse musical units, including those led by Dewey Redman, Bill Mays, Jane Ira Bloom, Denny Zeitlin, and Ray Anderson. Matt is also a Zildjian and Pearl artist clinician. You can contact him at matwiljazz@aol.com. Also check out his Web site, www.matwilsonjazz.com.

Bob Marley's
Carlton Barrett
Reggae History, Style, And Analysis

by Sean Conta



Despite their close association with a cultural icon, the musicians who played with Bob Marley are often overlooked. But it's not difficult to argue that the members of his band have had nearly as large an impact on the sound of reggae as Marley himself. Carlton Barrett, The Wailers' longtime drummer and inventor of the one-drop beat, is no exception.

Barrett was born in Kingston, Jamaica in 1951, son to Wilfred and Violet Barrett and brother to Aston. An early drumset for Carly in the Kingston trenchtown consisted of some empty paint cans and an old cymbal he found in the street. But even with these crude instruments, Carly, along with Aston on bass, began to develop the deep rhythmic and musical connection that would define the sound of reggae for years to come.

The brothers started their first band, The Hippy Boys, with singer Max Romeo before being asked to back Lee "Scratch" Perry in a band known as The Upsetters. It was through Lee Perry that the Barrett brothers first worked with the vocal trio known as The Wailers. The relationship would last through many years and would produce the most original and influential reggae music the world has ever heard.

The most useful sources of data on the technical aspects of Carly's drumming are glimpses of videos, audio examples, photographs in books and CD liner notes, and self-experimentation. That said, watching and listening is the most effective way to learn about reggae drumming, as it would have been the same method that Carly and so many other poor Jamaican musicians used.

We'll discuss some of Barrett's classic recordings shortly. But before going into his approach to drumming, it's helpful to get a feel for his drumset.

Hi-Hats: Arguably the most important voice in Carly's drumming, his hi-hats were fairly light 14" cymbals that produced a crisp and well-defined sound when played with sticks. On Marley's *Rainbow Theatre* concert video, you can see that Carly placed a cloth between the hi-hat cymbals to further tighten the sound. The use of muffling is a constant theme in his drum sound.

Bass drum: Carly used a 22" bass drum, usually with no front head. Removing the head greatly reduces the resonance and sustain of the drum, creating a blunt and powerful "thump." Carly also used a lot of muffling inside the drum, like a pillow or blanket, to achieve his sound.

Snare drum: This is perhaps the most unusual and mysterious part of Carly's sound. He often played it with the snares turned off, and always tuned the drum to a very high tension. In fact, in a brief close-up on Marley's *Catch A Fire* DVD (Image Entertainment, 1999), it appears as though the batter head is cranked so tightly that the metal drum hoop is virtually at the level of the head. The end result is a cutting and sharp cross-stick sound and a timbale-like effect when hit with sticks. It's a staccato sound with a *very* short decay.

Tom-Toms: Carly played single-headed toms to achieve a focused sound. (This tom sound was popular in the '70s.) To further muffle the sound, Carly can often be seen using cloth sandwiched between the drumhead and the drum shell.

Cymbals: Carly used one or two crash cymbals for accents. They were quite thin, with a shimmering sound and fairly short decay.

Percussion: Carly often augmented his basic kit with small percussion, such as a cowbell mounted on the hi-hat rod directly above the top cymbal.

Watching Barrett play quickly brings to light his self-taught, shall we say "low on technique" method around the set. But of course, technique is irrelevant as long as you can play with a good feel and groove. Carly had that in abundance. His drumming is a masterful, truly unique display of orchestration and phrasing.

For those unfamiliar with Barrett's drumming, you might want to check out the following Marley recordings. They'll give you a good overview of his work. In chronological order:

1) *African Herbsman* (Trojan/Sanctuary) features some very early Wailers material.

2) *Catch A Fire—Deluxe Edition* (Island/Tuff Gong). This recent edition of the classic Marley album includes previously unreleased master tracks.

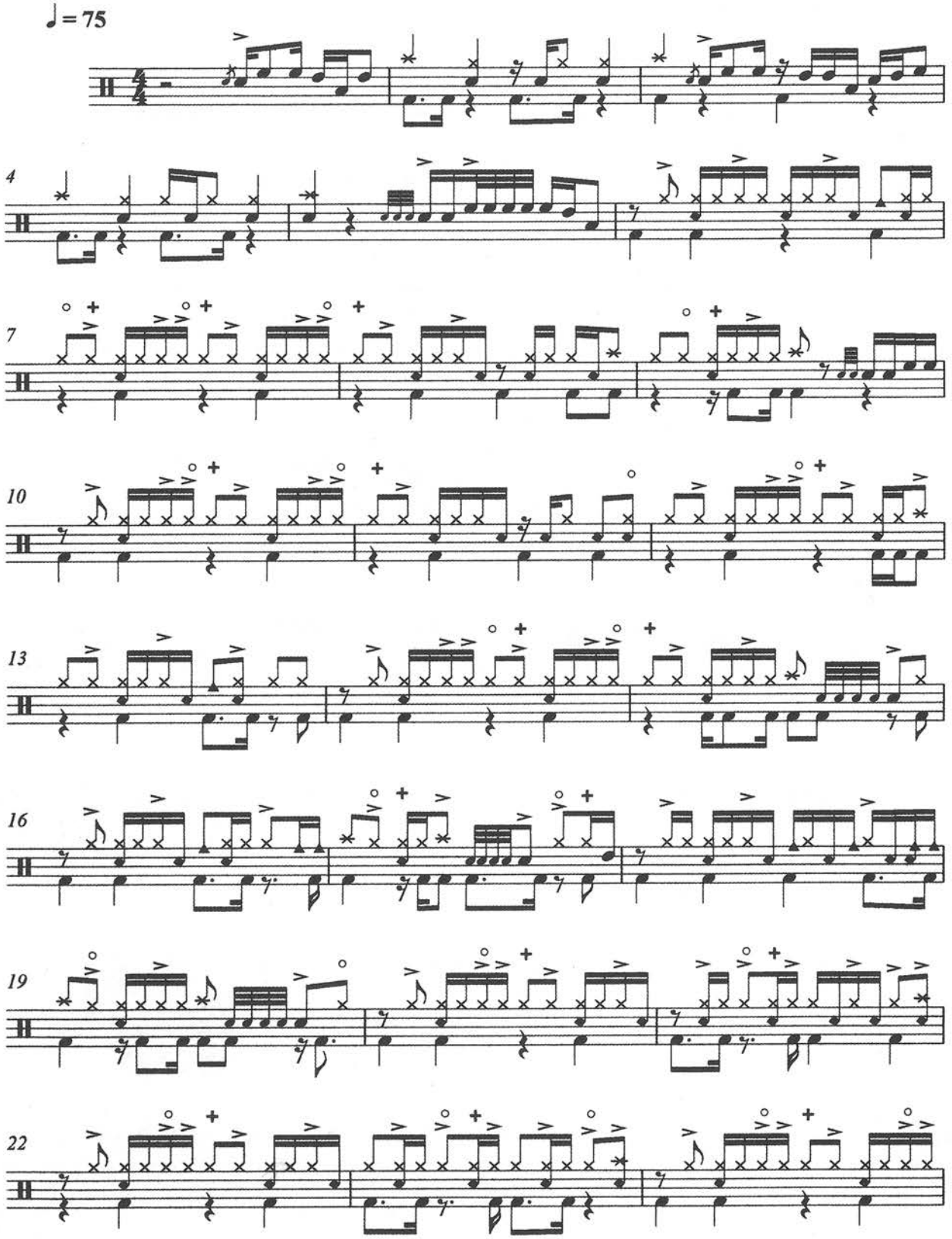
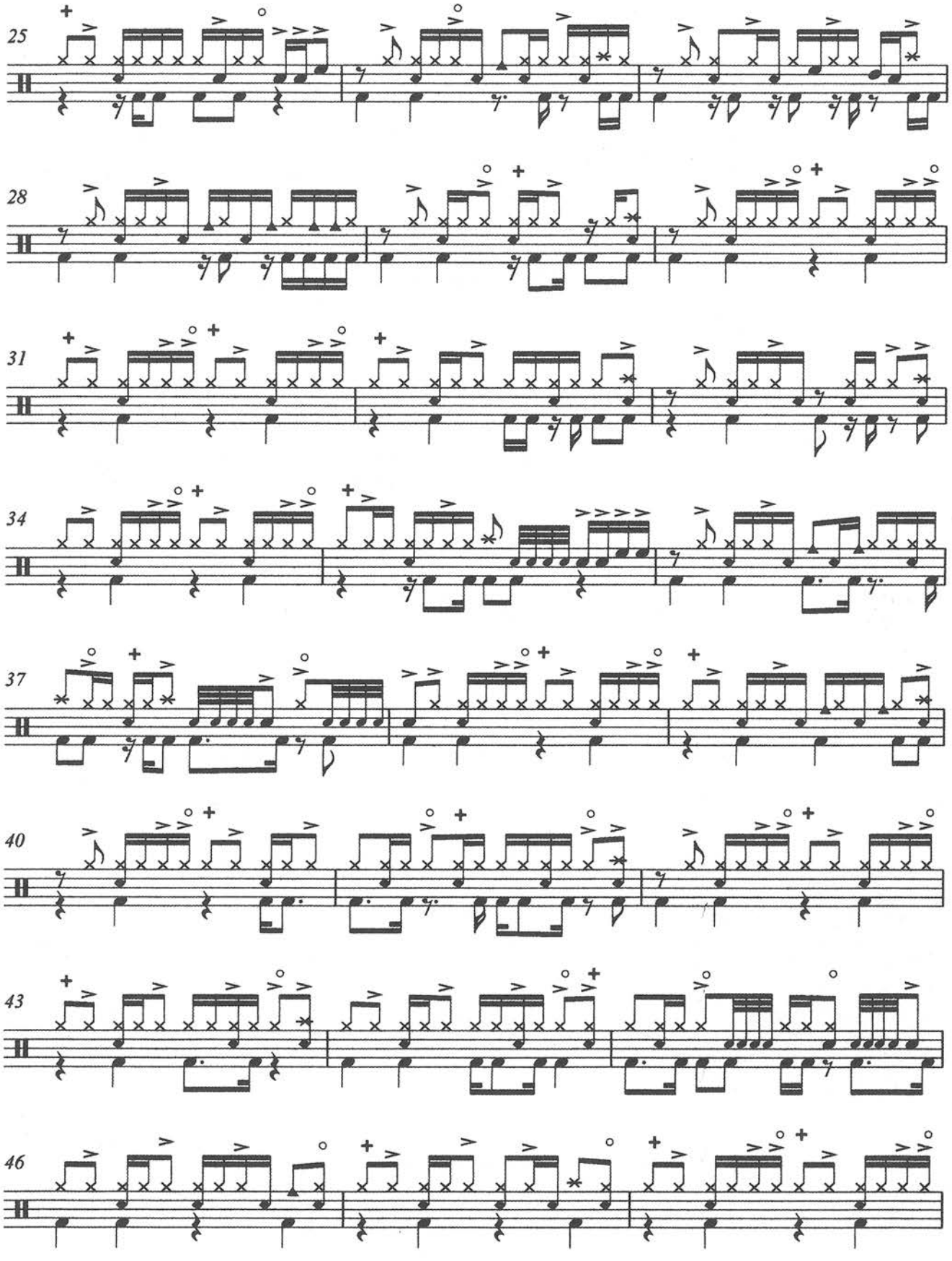
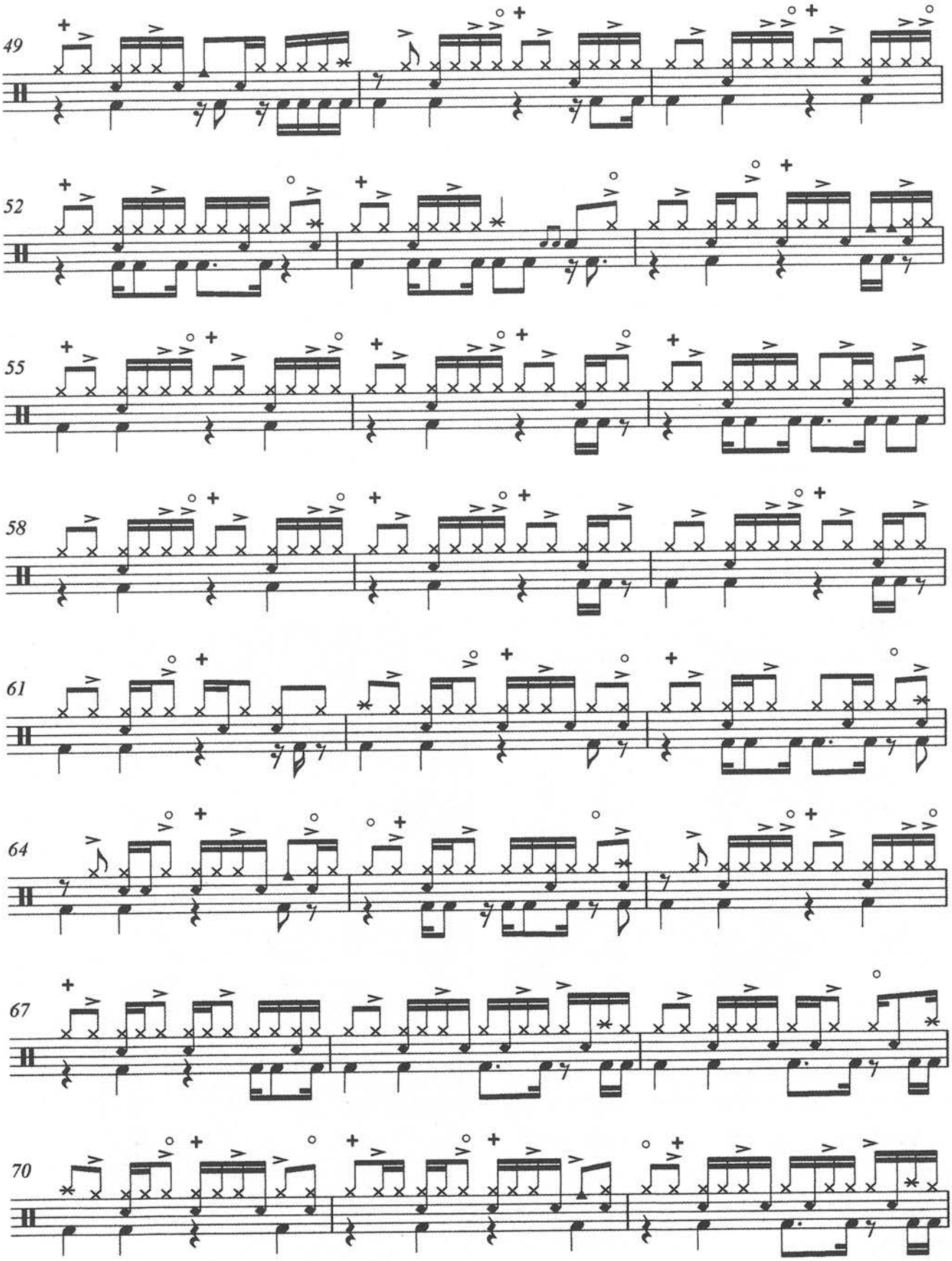
3) *Talkin' Blues* (Tuff Gong). This recording is interspersed with clips from an interview with Marley.

4) *Babylon By Bus* (Tuff Gong).

5) *Uprising* (Tuff Gong).

Carlton Barrett was known as a quiet, introverted man, uninterested in the spotlight. His tragic death on April 17, 1987 was a great loss to the music community. However, his strong influence on reggae drumming and music continues to this day.

"Them Belly Full (But We Hungry)"

It would be impossible to highlight the evolution of Carly's one-drop beat and all the variations thereof. But we chose to transcribe "Them Belly Full," from Bob Marley And The Wailers' classic *Live!* release, because it contains many of his signature licks and grooves.

Carlton Barrett

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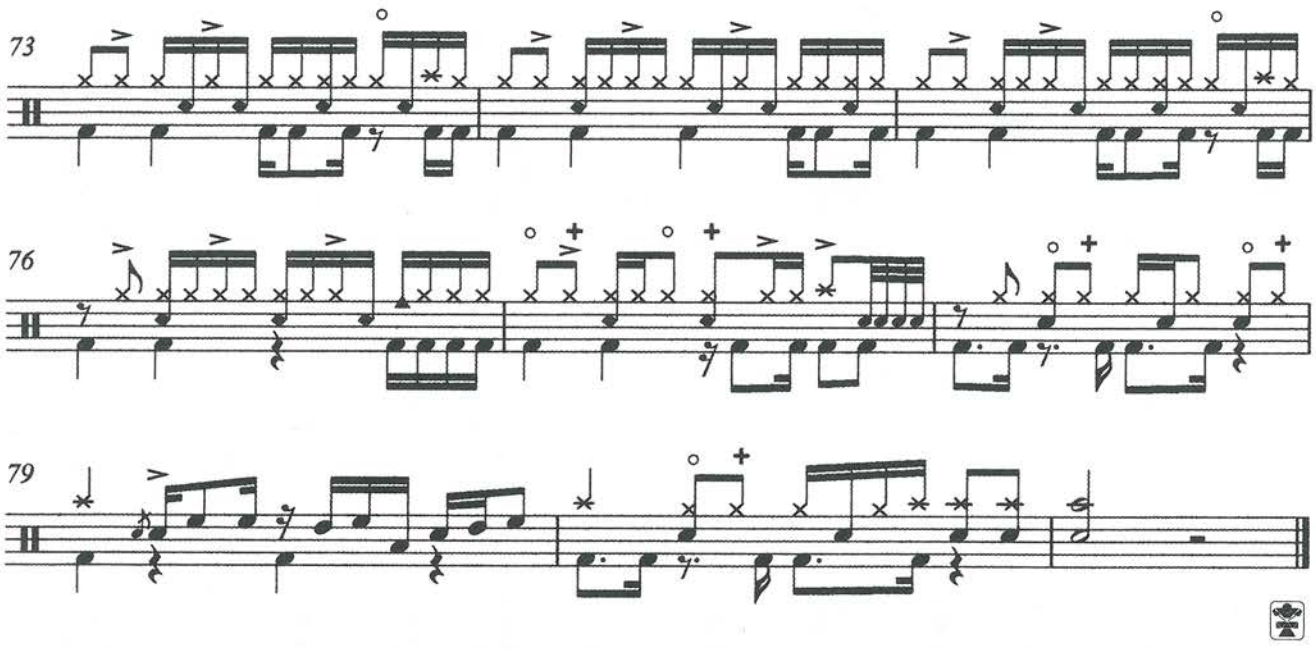
Carlton Barrett



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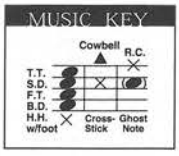
The Nanigo

More Afro-Cuban Coordination For Drumset

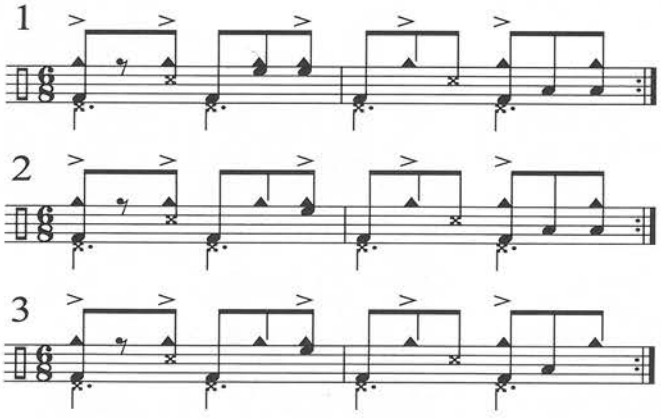
by Maria Martinez



Nanigo rhythms are derived from the percussion instruments played in the folkloric Afro-Cuban rhythm called guiro, which is often played in religious ceremonies. The rhythm is traditionally performed with a set of three or more shekeres (beaded gourds) and an iron bell. The guiro style sometimes includes a tumbadora (low-pitch conga drum) or cajon (wooden box).

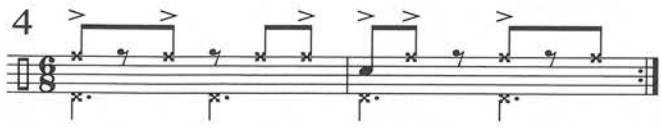
The different generic drumset interpretations of the 6/8 Afro-Cuban rhythms, which are hybrids of the traditional guiro rhythm, are sometimes referred to as Afro-Cuban 6/8, bembe, or nanigo.

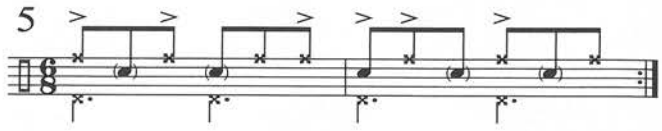
The following examples are traditional drumset interpretations, which work best during the A section or melody of a song. The notated cowbell part can also be played on a ride cymbal.

Traditional Drumset Interpretations

Nanigo Half-Time Ostinato

The nanigo ostinato consists of ride cymbal (or cowbell), snare drum, and hi-hat with foot. The written snare drum parts include a heavy, accented backbeat (on beat 1 of the second measure), which implies the half-time feel. These grooves work best during instrumental or solo sections.

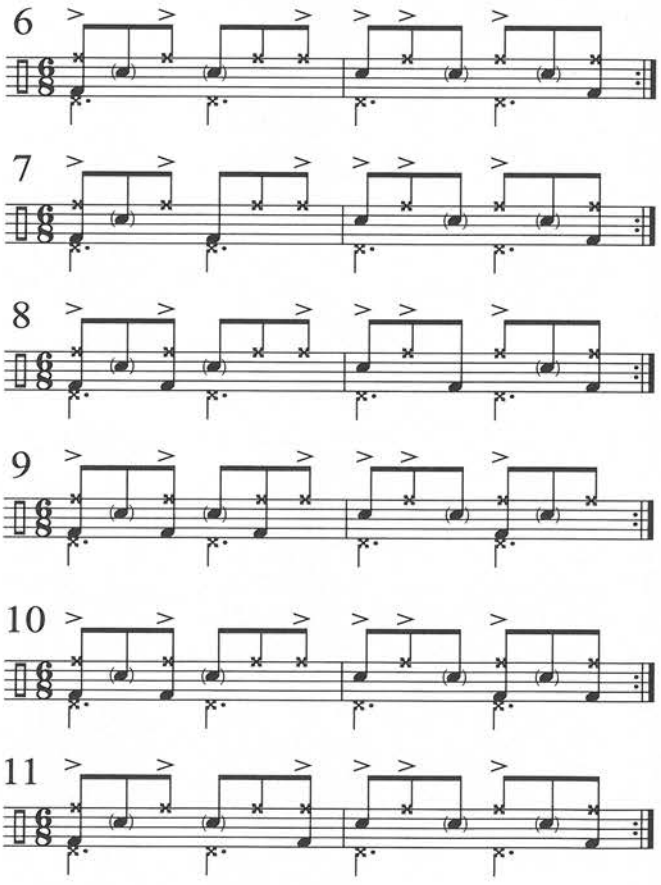
Begin by practicing the first ostinato below. Then once you're comfortable with it, play the second ostinato, which includes ghost notes on the snare drum. Because it's easy to rush while playing this groove, play all of the examples in this article with a click track.





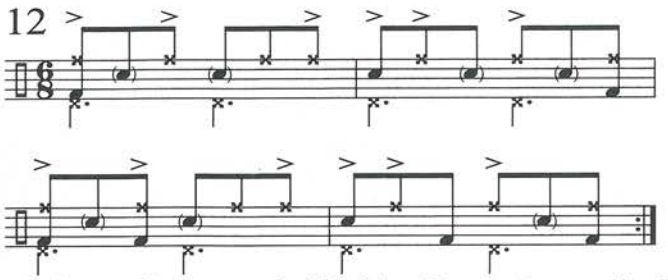
Nanigo Half-Time Bass Drum Variations

Now let's combine the nanigo half-time ostinato with a few different bass drum variations.



Next, let's try combining any two bass drum variations (from the previous examples) to create a nanigo half-time four-bar phrase. The following example is a four-bar phrase I created to play "Nanigo," a band feature on my *Afro-Cuban For Drumset Coordination* video.

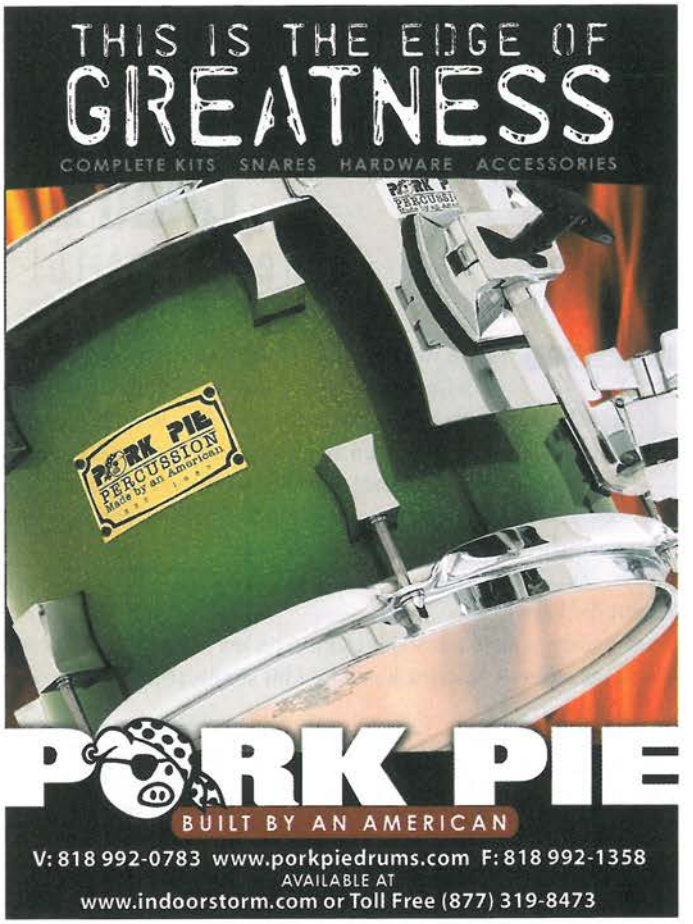
Four-Bar Phrase

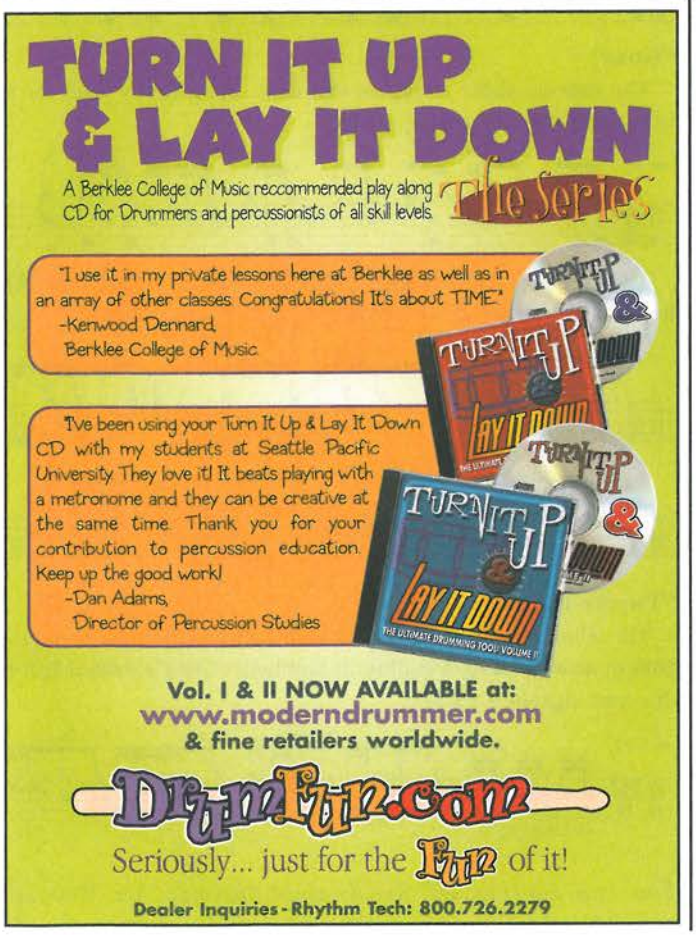


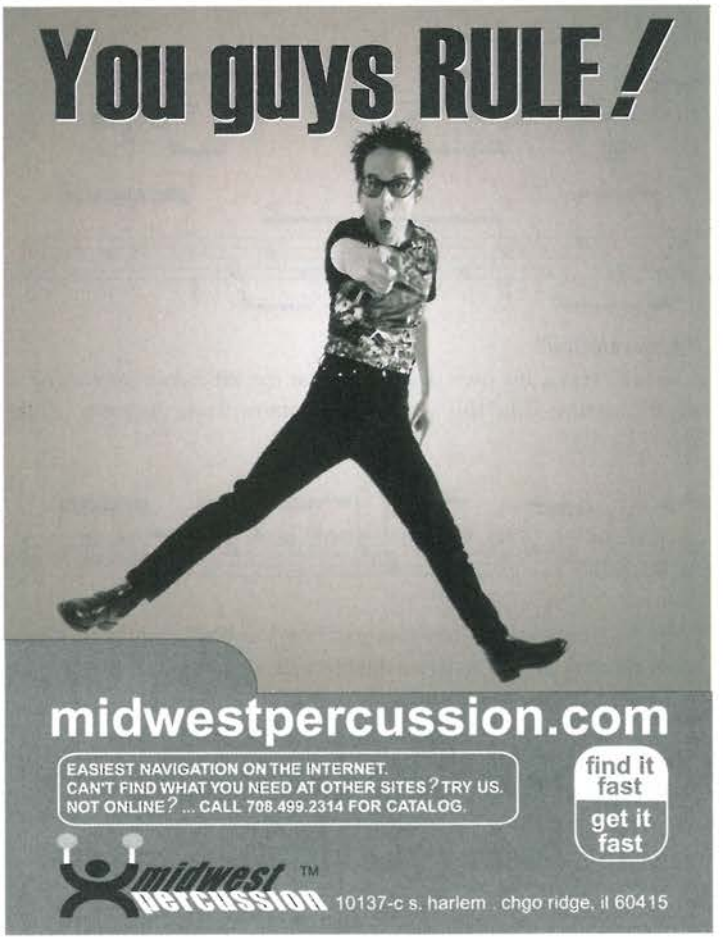
Finally, try going between the "Traditional Drumset Interpretations" and the "Nanigo Half-Time" examples. Choose one groove from the "Traditional Drumset Interpretations" section and play it an even number of times (and repeat several times) before making the transition to one of the grooves in the "Nanigo Half-Time" section.

Because there are many ways to play and interpret the nanigo rhythmic style, I encourage you to listen to and analyze authentic versions of it. Familiarize yourself with the feel of the music, the ethnic percussion instruments used, and the traditional parts played on those instruments. Then you'll be able to create your own hybrid interpretations of the nanigo.

To learn more about other Latin styles, check out Maria Martinez' Instant Guide To Drum Grooves *book/CD package. For drumset coordination in the Afro-Cuban and Brazilian styles, check out her book/CD packages and videos,* Afro-Cuban Coordination For Drumset *and* Brazilian Coordination For Drumset, *published by Hal Leonard. For more information, go to www.worldbeatrhythms.com.*

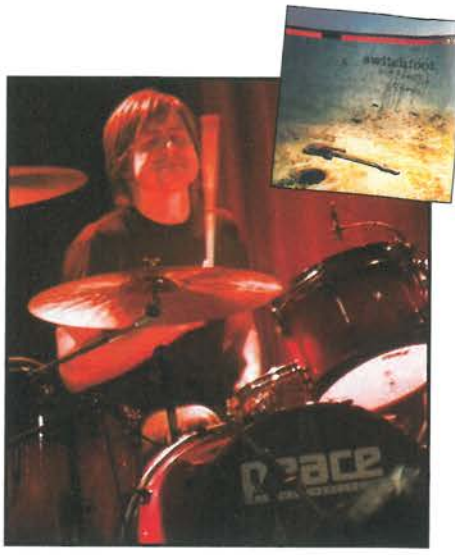






Switchfoot's Chad Butler
The Beautiful Letdown

by Ed Breckenfeld

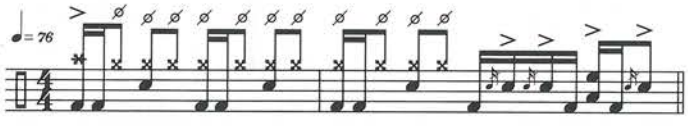
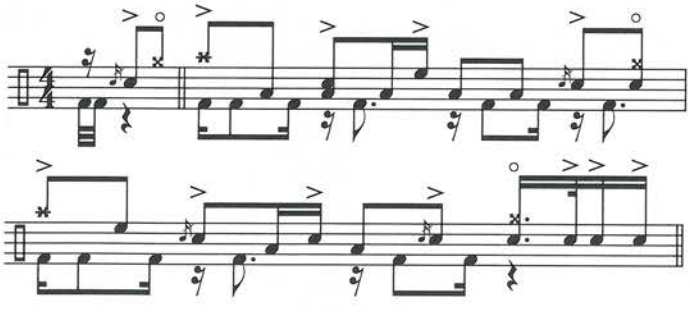


MUSIC KEY

Open H.H. T.T. S.D. F.T. B.D. O R.C. C.C. Ghost Note

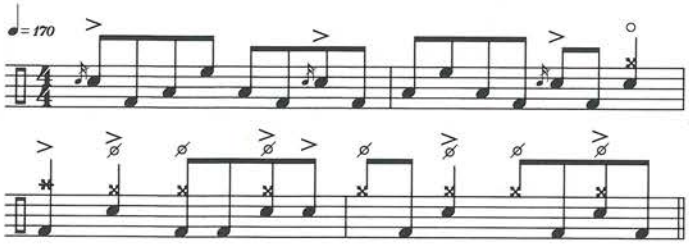
The fourth album from Switchfoot is reaching a wide mainstream audience with a positive message that stands in stark contrast to the darker sounds on modern rock radio. On *The Beautiful Letdown*, the band explores the region between hard-edged alt/rock and lighter pop, giving drummer Chad Butler a chance to showcase his versatility. Chad guides his band through driving rock grooves, heavy tom patterns, hip-hop beats, and the flow of 12/8 time with a steady hand. Let's check out a few of his groove ideas.

"Meant To Live"

Butler takes a page from Dave Grohl on his opening beat for the intro of the album's lead track and first hit single. (0:06)

The song's verses have a great sense of movement due to this floor tom groove, featuring some nice use of the small tom, along with snare flams and open hi-hat accents. (1:31)

"Ammunition"

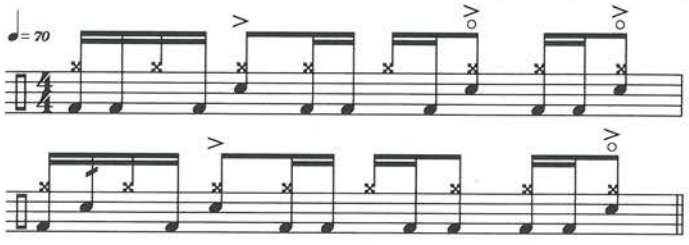
Chad creates his own drum loops on the kit rather than using a drum machine, like this syncopated pattern from the intro of the track. (0:01)

In the song's verse, the drum part bounces back and forth from a slow-moving tom groove to a double-time rock beat. (0:50)



"Dare You To Move"

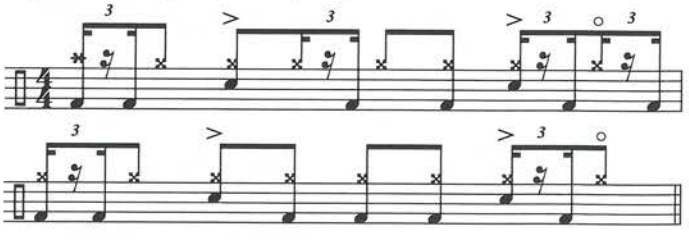
Look for the subtle changes between the first and second measure in this two-bar verse pattern. Chad creates interest by simply swapping around a few bass and snare notes while maintaining the rhythm. (1:38)



"Gone"

The ever-so-slight swing in this beat sets a funky tone for the intro and verse of the song. (0:16)

The groove shifts into high gear when Butler switches to a hip-hop feel for the pre-chorus. (0:42)



"Twenty-Four"

The album's closing track is a 12/8 ballad, with this re-entrance pattern near the song's ending. It highlights Chad's natural feel for this time signature. (3:31)

You can contact Ed Breckenfeld through his Web site, www.edbreckenfeld.com.

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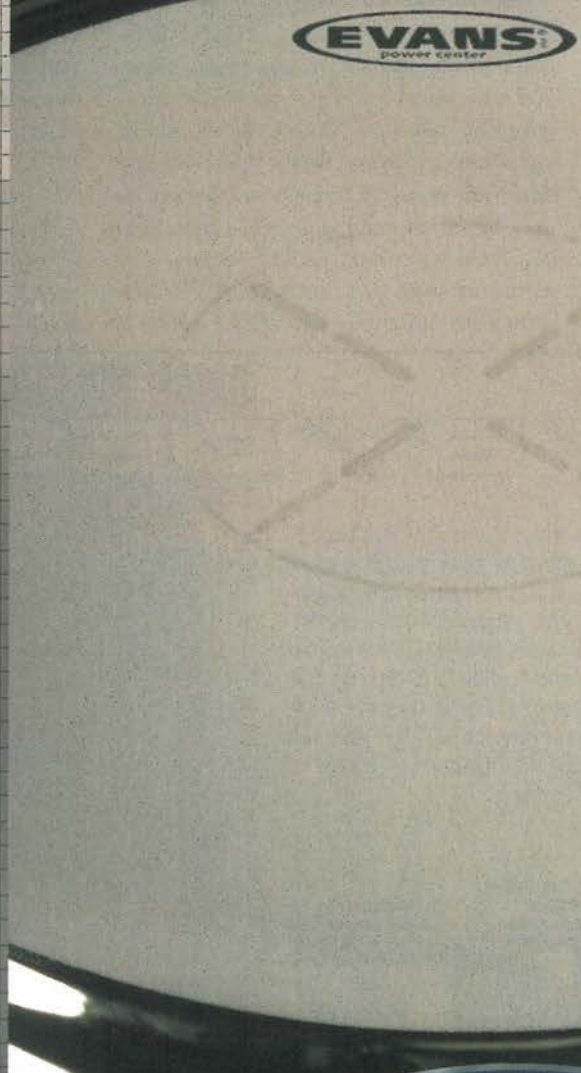

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Live Miking Tips

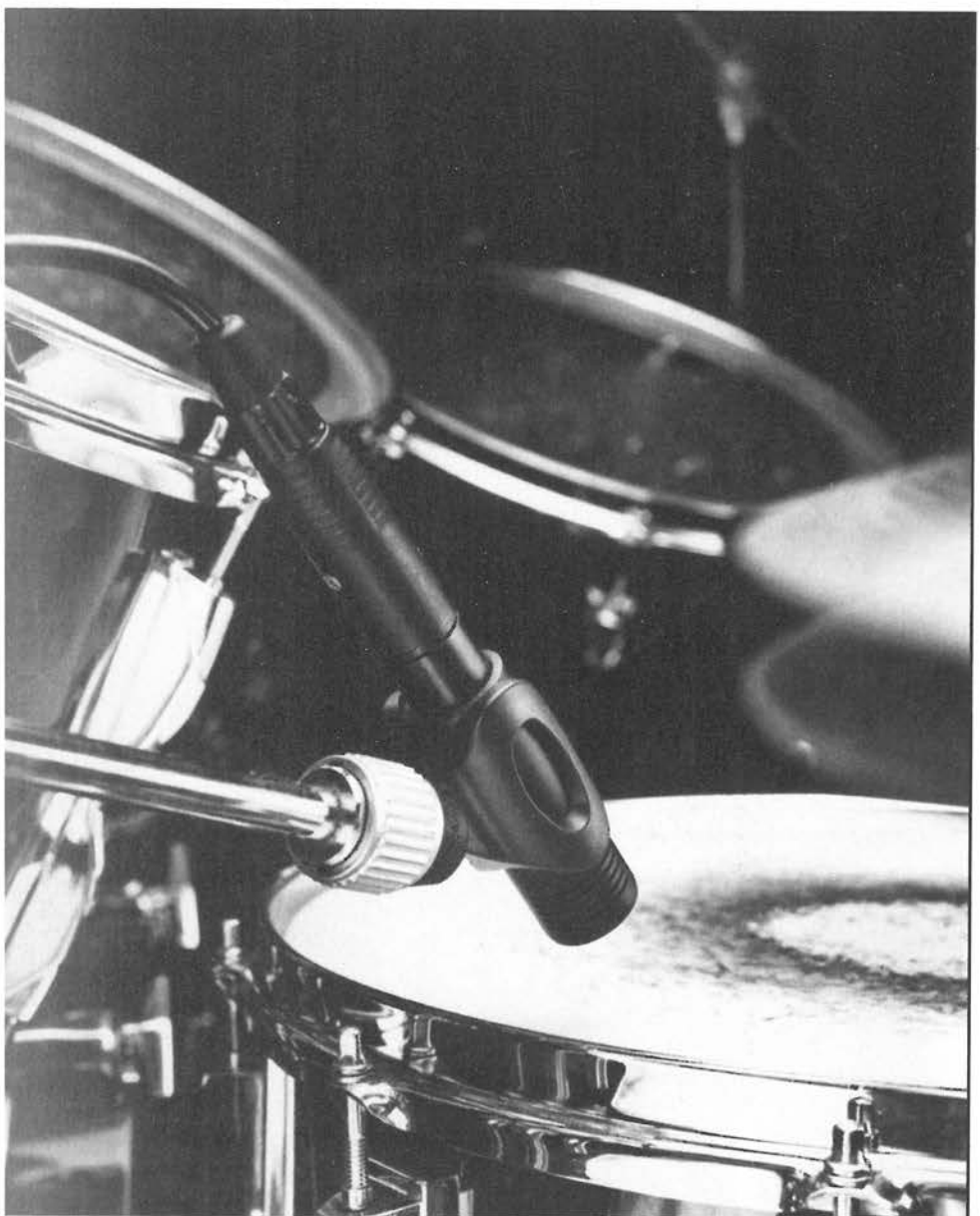
Maximizing The Minimum

by Mark Parsons

A while back, *MD* sent me some questions regarding drum miking, ostensibly to be answered in the *It's Questionable* department. However, a thorough response required more space than that department would allow, so the editors were kind enough to let me develop my answers into this article. We'll begin with the original inquiry, which came from Dave Smylie of Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

The Question

"I purchased two Shure KSM32 microphones after reading your January 2000 review in *MD*. What appealed to me was your comments about how efficient they were for getting a 'natural, open sound' using just the two overheads combined with a kick mic'. I have a fairly large drumset, and I want to use up as few channels as possible on our band's soundboard.



"My trouble comes when playing large venues where sound thresholds are high. I seem to lose the beautiful tones of my toms, and I'm left with just attack. Did your testing involve this kind of application?

"You mentioned that Peter Erskine's sound engineer used *only* the KSM32s, but I assume the volume levels weren't particularly loud in that situation. I also read Manu Katché's comments about recording with only *three* mic's with Andy Johns (with the third one being over the floor tom and under the ride). But again, I suppose a studio situation is much different from live.

"So, is it necessary to use close miking along with the overheads? Or can you suggest a way that I can achieve enough isolation to maintain a strong signal with just my three-mic' setup?"

Some Suggestions

Thanks for your questions, Dave. Actually, it looks as though you've pretty much figured out the realities of your situation. The concept of using a pair of overheads and a kick mic' for a "natural, open sound" certainly is more applicable to a studio setting—or a moderate-volume live setting, like a jazz gig—than to a full-on live rock environment. (By the way, what I mentioned in the KSM32 review in regard to Peter Erskine's sound did not refer to a sound engineer at a gig, but rather to producer Tom Jung recording Peter's Lounge Art Ensemble during a studio session.)

The key phrase here is "natural, open sound." When you use a minimalist mic' arrangement in settings you describe as "large venues where sound thresholds are high," the sound you get *is* a natural, open sound. The problem is that the high volume of the other instruments intrudes on the sound of your drums. This "blanket of

sound" covers up some of the drums' tones, allowing only the more prominent ones to cut through. This, in turn, is why you're left primarily with the "attack" characteristic of your toms.

It may help to think of your dilemma in terms of signal-to-noise ratio. The "signal" is the sound that reaches the mic' from your drums, while the "noise" is all other sound that also reaches the mic'. In a good studio environment—one in which there is good isolation from other instruments, and the reflected sound from the well-designed room is a desirable component—there may actually be no "noise." In such a case you can achieve a great—and very natural—drum sound with few mic's placed in a relatively distant location.

Now, compare that to your high-volume live setting. You don't have much (if any) isolation from the other instruments, and you're probably not getting any help from the room, either. To increase your signal-to-noise ratio (and to address your primary question of whether close mic's are necessary to achieve enough isolation), you have three main options.

1. Yes, close mic's could definitely help in your situation. By reducing the distance from the sound source to the mic', they effectively raise the signal level and lower the noise. Since you'll be using them for drums only (that is, not to augment cymbals), I'd choose some small clip-on tom mic's. These could be dynamic or condenser types. Dynamics are simpler (no phantom power or battery required) and more rugged, while condensers will usually have better transient response. There are great-sounding versions of both types available, and this style will also save you from buying (and hauling) a bunch of extra stands.

2. You could also reduce the distance between your existing KSM32s and the sources that you wish to sound warmer and louder in your overall drum mix: your toms. This involves a hybrid placement I call the "low overhead" miking style. The specifics obviously depend on the arrangement of your particular drumset, but the method basically involves lowering the overheads so that they are more *between* the cymbals than above them, thus allowing the mic's to be much closer to the toms. (The KSMs should do well here, since they're cardioid and not hypercardioid.)

If your kit has a forest of cymbals directly above all your toms, then this will be problematic. But it's possible to mike up a decent-sized kit (such as a seven-piece with three mounted toms above the kick and a pair of large toms on the right side) with this method and get a good sound.

The key is to experiment. Go down to the club during the day and temporarily remove your cymbals. Move the KSMs in until you get a good tom sound coming from the P.A. Your goal is to get a balanced sound, where one tom doesn't stick out way above the others. So don't try to get the mic's as close as you'd typically place an individual tom mic'. A good place to start may be 12"–18" above the drums, but again it depends on the configuration of your kit. When you have the drum sound the way you want it, replace your cymbals. You may or may not have to relocate them somewhat, depending on your situation and your comfort level. It's your call as to whether moving a cymbal slightly is worth the improvement in sound.

3. Look at some of the live concerts you see taped for TV broadcast (or virtually any lounge act in Vegas), and you'll often see clear plastic panels around the drumset. This provides increased isolation in both directions. It keeps some of the blazing guitars out of the drum mic's, and of course helps keep the drums from bleeding into the band's vocal mic's. You may want to experiment with this (in combination with the miking methods mentioned above). Here, too, though, there are tradeoffs. Acrylic drum shields are readily available, but they're not cheap, and they are a little cumbersome to carry around from gig to gig.

A Few More Ideas

Personally, I'd start by experimenting with the techniques outlined in #2 above. If that wasn't enough, I'd add a small clip-on dynamic to the snare. If that still wasn't enough, I'd add as few clip-on tom mic's as I could get away with and still get a balanced, full tom sound. (Try using one mic' per pair of closely placed toms.)

To free up channels in your band's board—which you mentioned was an issue—you could get a small mixer to submix the kit mic's with. Then you could just send a stereo signal to two channels on your main console.

I hope these suggestions prove useful to you. Good luck!

Sol Percussion

Old-World Manufacturing Skills Are Alive And Well

by Rick Long

Akbar Moghaddam, owner of Sol Percussion

It's a beautiful day in San Francisco. The flight up from southern California has been smooth. High-tech metal detectors and X-ray machines enhanced my safety on the journey. Upon arrival, I buy a magnetized ticket at the automatic vending machine for the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system, which I ride into town. The cab ride from the BART subway station includes computerized tracking of fares. All this leads me to reflect on the fact that we live in a very high-tech world.

Then a decidedly low-tech thing happens. The cab pulls up in front of an old warehouse that appears to be shuttered, and I fear that I've come to the wrong address. However, a quick peek inside to see stacks of red oak planks and rows of conga shells confirms that this is, indeed, a working percussion factory. After receiving a cheery "Hello" from Sol Percussion owner Akbar Moghaddam, I wave the cabbie on. I've just crossed over to a place where old-world skills and human hands are the only technology in use.

History

The story of Sol Percussion begins with a percussion craftsman named Tom Flores, who started manufacturing Cuban drums in Los Angeles in 1954 under the name Valje. Famous congueros like Armando Peraza and Poncho Sanchez played Valje drums at that time.

Flores sold the company to San Francisco–based Haight Ashbury Music Center in 1983. Akbar Moghaddam had been working for Haight Ashbury Music as a drum and percussion repairperson. He was sent to the Valje shop in Los Angeles to learn the art of building drums from Flores and another artisan, Octavio Ruiz. After about a year, Haight Ashbury Music moved the Valje operation to San Francisco to facilitate better control over the business. Akbar returned to San Francisco with the company, bringing Octavio with him.

On April 6th, 1986, a fire consumed the Valje building, ending production. Latin Percussion purchased the Valje name some years later, and began manufacturing drums under that moniker in Thailand.

After the fire, Octavio returned to southern California, while Akbar went back to work as a master drum-repair technician. He worked on drums for

A Sol Sampler

Sol Congas
Sol states that their reputation is built on these drums (pictured below left). The 30"-high drums are made of red oak, with US grade A cowskin heads and Sol's innovative tensioning hardware. Their compact shape reflects an old-style Cuban drum, and is said to produce strong bass, tight resonance, and a super-sharp slap. The shape also makes the drum easier to hold between the legs, to lift, or to fit into a multiple-drum setup. Prices range from $800 for the 10½" Quinto to $870 for the 13" Super Tumba, with the 16" Titanic priced at $1,400.

Rumba Congas

Sol Rumba Congas are made of red oak, and are 30" high. They feature a lower, wider belly than the Sol Conga design. The shell is said to produce a longer melodic resonance, coupled with strong bass and a crisp slap. Prices range from $800 for the 9¾" Super Quinto to $890 for the 13" Super Tumba.

Classic Congas

A reproduction of a vintage Cuban design, Classic congas feature 30"-high red mahogany shells, cowskin heads, and cold-rolled wire-brushed steel hardware. The design combines the Sol profile with traditional hardware made to Sol specifications. The comfort crown, straight lugs, rectangular sideplates, and horizontal bolts are dressed with four steel bands to resemble congas of the 1950s. Prices range from $800 for the 10½" Quinto to $870 for the 13" Super Tumba.

African Congas

Sol African Congas have a longer bass tone and more sustain than the company's Cuban-style congas. They are similar to Afro-Cuban bonko drums used in Abakua music, and to boku used in the Carnaval music of Santiago de Cuba. Sol uses kiln-dried red oak and thinner cowskin heads for these 44"-high drums. Prices range from $780 for the 10½" Quinto to $820 for the 13" Tumba.

Sol Bongo
Designed after the traditional Cuban bongo, Sol's professional lightweight bongos have red oak shells, a unique bearing edge bevel, a compact comfort crown, and "an economy of hardware that goes easy on your legs." The drums are said to possess a brilliant sound, using a horseskin head on the 7x6 macho (small drum) and a cowskin head on the 7x8½ hembra (large drum). The bongos are priced at $500.

Classic Bongo

The Classic bongo is of the same design as the Sol series bongo but is built with a mahogany shell and wire-brushed steel to match the Classic congas. The 7x6/7x 8½ set is standard; a 6½x6/6½x9 set is available for greater sonic contrast. Both are priced at $500.

Changüi Bongo
This bongo is inspired by an instrument used in the traditional Cuban musical styles known as changüi and son. The 8x9/8x10 changüi bongo features a deeper and wider proportion and a conventional glued skin head. It's priced at $350.

Custom Bongos
Sol bongos can be made to order with custom materials such as lacewood, purpleheart, and zebrawood, with chrome hardware. Custom Bongos are priced on demand.

Tambora

Sol's Dominican-style tambora features a red oak shell and the same construction and design as their other drums. Used for merengue music, the tambora features double goatskin heads on each end to produce the characteristic tonality. Tamboras are priced at $740.

Bata

Sol's bata drum is modeled after the sacred instrument used by the Yuruba people of Nigeria. Although traditionally used strictly for spiritual purposes, these drums are found today in many types of music. Sol makes the iya ($960), itotele ($840), and okonkolo ($660) models of red oak, in the larger Afro-Cuban style. They feature a lightweight tuning system.

Talking Drum

Sol's modern version of this traditional West African drum with a mahogany shell and goatskin heads comes in three sizes, each priced at $300. Their synthetic tension cord is said to be much stronger than traditional leather. It is also stretch-resistant, resulting in a more efficient and durable instrument.

Ashiko

The ashiko drum is indigenous to southwestern Nigeria. Sol's is made from mahogany or pine with a synthetic cord and goatskin head. It has guiro lines on the bottom for added effect, and is said to be an excellent instrument for the professional or for the drum gathering. It's priced at $400.

Cajon
Inspired by the Cuban box drum, the Sol cajon has the tonal variety of all-wood drums yet is built to the height of a conga (30"). It produces a sharp slap, as well as loud, contrasting deep bass tones. The cajon is made with an American red oak or mahogany shell and a Honduras mahogany top. Prices range from $400 for a 10" quinto to $440 for a 14" tumba.

Conga Oriental de Cuba
These drums are made to the same specification as Eastern Cuban Carnival drums used in Carnivals de Santiago and Guantanamo. The lightweight, colorful shells and economy of hardware make these ideal Carnival parade comparsa drums.

Boku Drums
Sol's boku drums feature pine shells, select cowskin heads, a comfort crown, rectangular sideplates, and horizontal bolts to ensure consistent quality of sound throughout the Carnival parade.

Bombo Drums
Sol bombos are designed after the Cuban-style bombo. They feature 100%-maple ply shells, select cowskin heads, and sturdy steel hardware for a wide tonal range and a sustained outdoor sound.

Talking Shakers

Sol's Talking Shakers are small cylindrical wooden shells containing metal pellets and covered with skin on each end. Each shaker is capable of changing its sound depending on how the player holds, squeezes, and shakes it. Held one way the pellets sound off the wood; held another way they sound off the skin. The pellets can be shaken directly from head to head or shell to shell, or they can be swirled to generate unlimited variety from both. The skin can be squeezed to tighten, loosen, and otherwise modulate the sound. The shakers are priced at $30 per pair.

Drum Hardware

Sol states that their unique hardware is the result of years of experience at building their own originals and correcting the mistakes of others. For example, Sol's Sun side plates are made of cold-rolled steel and feature horizontally aligned bolts that virtually eliminate the common problem of side plate bending. All hardware is hand-made in Sol's shop and powder-coated in a gold vein finish for durability and beauty.

Conga Stand

Sol's solid-steel conga stands feature a leg design said to stabilize the drum, eliminate tilting, and expand the drum's tonal range. A short stand is priced at $120; a tall stand sells for $140.

Bata Stand
The Sol bata stand, made of cold-rolled steel, can reliably suspend and secure the iya, itotele, and okonkolo drums in a position that gives the player the flexibility to hit all six heads in succession and with total confidence. The configuration is fully adjustable to accommodate different drum sizes and brands, and to suit the preferences of each player. Its uncomplicated design is said to make it easy and quick to set up. It's priced at $600.

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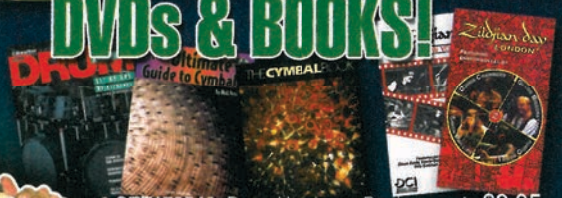

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many of San Francisco's musical elite, including The Grateful Dead and Santana. Repairing so many drums led Akbar to ponder why they were breaking in the first place. He examined the problems as they came in, and developed theories on how drums could be manufactured to avoid the stresses and strains that led to failures. He determined to set up his own percussion manufacturing business where his theories could be put into practice.

This brings us to 1992 and the launch of Sol Percussion. Akbar's goal was to create drums by using the old-world skills learned from Flores, combined with his own design ideas. In 2000, Octavio Ruiz re-joined the operation.

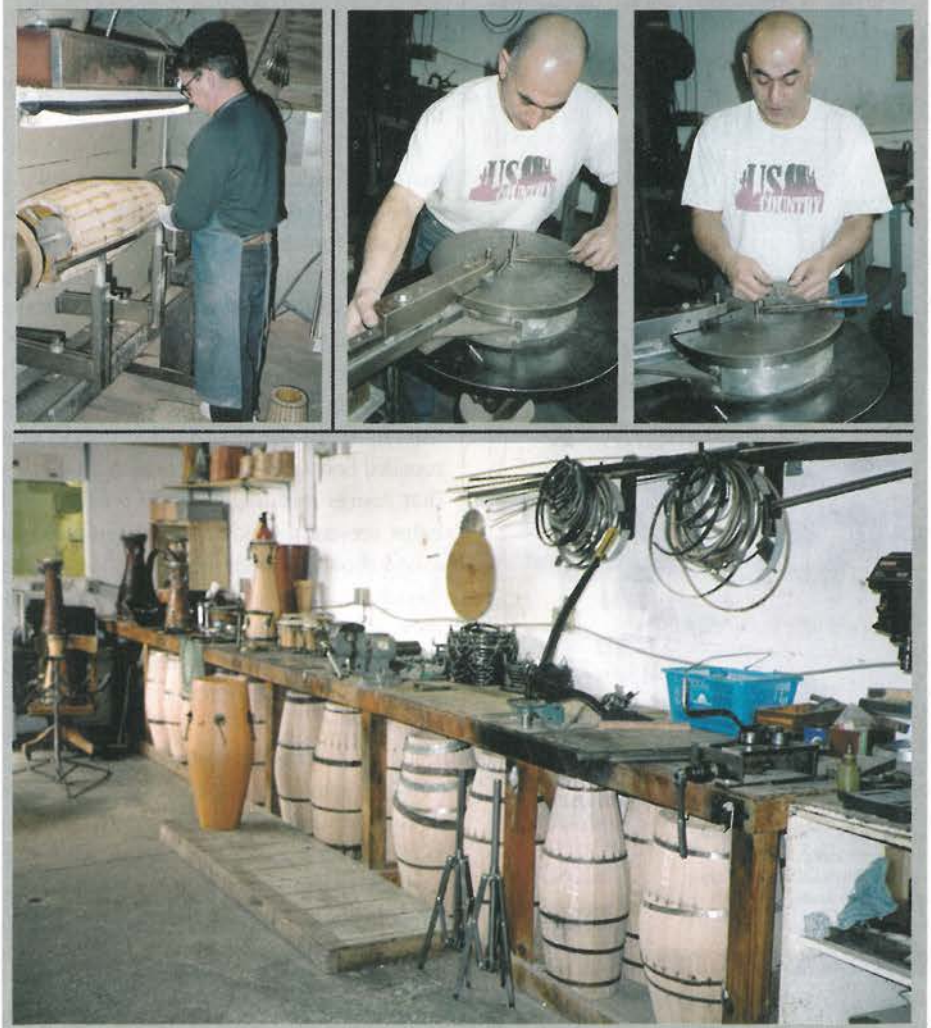
Drum Construction

Akbar and Octavio manufacture everything in the Sol Percussion catalog quite literally by hand. Their "manufacturing as art" mindset is evident in the quality of construction and tone that's found in their instruments.

All Sol drums begin their life as planks of red oak that has been air-dried for six months. Red oak is used because of its stability when moving between differing climates. The planks are cut into strips and placed side-by-side in a steel ring to form a round shell. The newly formed shells are placed into a warming vat with a bit of water in the bottom. The wood soaks up the water and becomes flexible. Then the bottom, flared portion of the shell is pulled together and another ring is placed, such that both ends of the shell are snug. This non-glued version is allowed to cure for at least two months so that the wood re-forms into the desired shape of the drum.

The shell is then glued together, using an adhesive that creates a bond stronger than the wood itself. This prevents the shell from ever pulling apart. After several days, the shell is put on a motorized lathe, on which it's shaped

On The Factory Floor



Clockwise from top left: Drum craftsman Octavio Ruiz smoothes out a conga shell on a lathe. Owner Akbar Moghaddam uses a hand-driven bending machine to create receiving rings for conga rims. Newly formed conga shells sit for two months to ensure that the wood has properly cured into the correct shape.

using hand tools designed by Octavio Ruiz.

The shell is smoothed for finishing in a multi-step process. All excess glue is removed from outside and inside the shell. Akbar states that removing the glue inside the shell is one of the extra steps he likes to take to improve the sound of the drum. After a sealer is applied, multiple coats of clear satin lacquer are hand-rubbed to give the shell's natural wood the best possible appearance.

Lugs, rims, and tension rods on Sol Percussion products are not stamped out by an overseas manufacturer. The parts are fashioned in the factory from cold-rolled stainless-steel stock that resists bending out of shape when under tension. The receiving rings on the conga rim are shaped using a hand-driven metal bending apparatus. This same device is used to make tension rods, which are designed to sit closer to the drumshell than those on most other brands of drums. This is especially helpful at preventing leg pain for bongo players.

Even the side plates, which are cut into the shape of the sun, are made in-house. One of the many problems that Akbar discovered in his days as a drum-repair tech was that conga side plates would eventually bend away from the shell, due to the tremendous tension they're under. So Akbar designed a smaller side plate with closely spaced bolt holes along the lower portion. These holes are positioned so that the tension created by the pull of the rod is more evenly spread between the side plate and the shell, thus preventing any disfiguring of the plate.

Rims for Sol Percussion drums are made from $\frac{5}{8}$" stock, but are double the standard thickness, with a rounded "comfort crown" edge. The double thickness helps prevent the rim from being distorted by tension, and the rounded edge makes the drum more comfortable to play. "Players would come to me after a gig and talk about how their hands hurt," Akbar says. "Much of what we do at Sol Percussion is for the health of the musician."

Even the finish of the metalwork has received specific attention. Instead of chrome plating, which always seems to need polishing, Akbar chose to powder-coat all hardware in a gold-vein design. This finish gives a subtle, antique elegance to the look of the metal. Such attention to detail is just another of the many facets of this company that set it apart from mass manufacturers.

All Sol Percussion drums are sold with animal-skin heads. Goatskin is used on talking drums and ashiko drums. Cowhide is used for congas. Horsehide is used on some small drums that require high head tension. The skins are cut to fit at the factory, with excess pieces used to make Sol's Talking Shakers.

Another example of Akbar's problem-solving abilities is found in the design of the ring used to mount the animal skins. Instead of a rounded hoop, Akbar uses a squared-off hoop that resists misshaping from tension, and helps prevent the skin from slipping. When asked about synthetic heads, Akbar replies, "Synthetic heads are okay for live performance, where you want a lot of volume. But for the traditional tone needed for recording, animal skin is the only way to go."

Design Concepts

While attention to quality is a major focus at Sol, innovation hasn't exactly taken a backseat. As a matter of fact, the diminutive manufacturer recently won an award for the Most Innovative Entrepreneur Of The Year in the Bay Area, presented by the San Francisco Small Business Commission.

As an example of Sol's innovative spirit,

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Sol Percussion

Akbar designed a conga shell with the belly placed higher than on traditional shells. The compact shape is much like a Cuban drum, and produces a strong bass response, a tight resonance, and a sharp slap sound. In keeping with Akbar's desire to create instruments that make drumming less painful for the player, the shell design allows the drum to be held between the legs more comfortably.

Rather than offering only the three traditional drum sizes of tumba, conga, and quinto, Akbar expanded the Sol line to five drums. A larger tumba and an even larger Titanic model are available for players who are looking for new options in sound.

Realizing that some players want the traditional conga sound, Akbar also makes Rumba congas, which feature the belly in the lower position. Like the Sol series congas, they're available in five sizes, with the extras being a small super quinto and a large super tumba.

Besides congas, Sol also offers two models of bongos. The Sol bongo resembles a classic Cuban bongo. The Sol Changüi bongo has a deeper and wider proportion, along with glued-on heads. Other percussion instruments produced by Sol include tamboras, batas, a talking drum, and a model of ashiko.

Sometimes Akbar will take a traditional idea and twist it around into a whole new instrument. For example, Sol cajon drums combine a Cuban box drum with a conga shape to create a drum that offers a sharp slap with loud open bass tones. Sol African congas are similar to long, thin Afro-Cuban bonko drums that are used in Abakua music.

Another specialty instrument in the Sol lineup is the Talking Shaker. This is a small, hollow wooden shell about the same diameter and three times the depth of an Oreo cookie. It's filled with shaker beads and covered on each end with glued-on animal skin. Holding the device in one's hand and applying varying amounts of finger pressure on one or both heads produces a multitude of sounds.

Innovation is also evident in Sol's stand department. For example, the company was the first to introduce a triple bata stand. With input from percussion great John Santos, Akbar and Octavio designed an adjustable stand that will fit batas from any manufacturer. Refinements in this stand are currently underway to further increase its adjustability.

Education

Sol Percussion doesn't just manufacturer drums. They also teach drumming. A studio just inside the front door is used to hold group percussion lessons and to demo the drums for factory visitors. Akbar especially likes to host factory tours for groups of local students.

In The Marketplace

Akbar is negotiating with dealers in an attempt to get more of his instruments in front of customers, but readily admits that it isn't easy. "Most dealers want mass-produced instruments that are more affordable for younger players," he explains. "Sol doesn't try to compete in that market, simply because that level of instrument is not what we are about."

What Sol *is* about is making instruments that are the finest examples of their genre. Akbar hopes that dealers may want to consider stocking small numbers of Sol Percussion instruments, "as a way to better service their semi-pro and pro-level players who want the best drums available."

Further information on Sol Percussion can be found at www.soldrums.com and through the factory at PO Box 170422, San Francisco, CA 94117, (415) 468-4700.

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Becoming A Percussion Music Major

Early Preparation Is The Key

by Douglas Wurst

College bound? Anxious to become a music major on orchestral percussion? Well, back the van up! What you do in the years *before* college may make the difference between moving your snare into a dorm room or being told to beat it. Follow the suggestions given below, and you'll be better prepared for college-level music theory, music history, performances, and auditions.

Music Theory 101

Music Theory 101 is the "make or break" course for most percussionists. Because a percussionist's mother tongue is rhythm, melody and harmony often remain foreign languages. If this describes you, take piano lessons, or learn to play the concert bells, marimba, xylophone, or vibraphone. Another way to become "bilingual" is to join a choir. To survive music theory, you must learn to "see with your ears and hear with your eyes."

There are a few skills professors hope you'll have before you take music theory 101. First, you should know how to identify, write, and perform major and minor scales in bass and treble clef, melodic intervals up to an octave (an interval is the distance between two notes), and major, minor, diminished, and augmented chords.

You should also know how to take rhythmic and melodic dictation. This is where a person plays a rhythm or melody for you to write down. If you are new to this skill, start with easy rhythmic patterns and melodies of two to four measures.

In addition, you should know how to sight sing. Again, start with easy rhythmic patterns and melodies of two to four measures.

Finally, you should have basic piano skills. You will be expected to play intervals, scales, and four-part harmony progressions on the piano.

You'll find the following books helpful: *Music Theory, Scales And Chords For The Percussion Drum Student* by Phil Zampino (PAZ Publishing), and *Understanding The Language Of Music: A Drummer's Guide To Theory And Harmony* by Ron Spagnardi (Modern Drummer Publications).

What you do in the years before college may make the difference between moving your snare into a dorm room or being told to beat it.

Music History 101

All music majors must take music history. If you're unfamiliar with the history of "classical" music of western Europe and the Americas, you'll be at a huge disadvantage. If you need a little push to study this music, let your interest in percussion guide the way. For example: Do you know when the snare drum was first developed, how it was played, who the first composers to write for it were, or what their music sounded like? Use this same line of questioning for other percussion instruments. Soon you'll know something about each of the following musical periods: Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and the Twentieth Century.

Another painless way to learn about music history is to read biographies of important composers. If the idea of reading a dusty, thick, dry book about a person who died hundreds of years ago sounds unappealing, then don't choose that type of book. There are many interesting books about famous composers written especially for young adults. Some of the best of these include *Bach And Baroque Music* and *Mozart And Classical Music* by Stefano Catucci and Hans Tid (Barron's Educational Series), and *Great Composers* by Stuart A. Kallen (Gale Group).

Preparing For College-Level Performances

Prepare for college-level performing by becoming the best percussionist you can be right now. This means practicing every day for at least one hour. At college, you'll be expected to practice and rehearse for several hours each day. Putting in time with your instrument now will help you build the stamina you'll need for performing at the college level.

If you aren't taking private lessons—start! A private instructor can troubleshoot specific problems and help you prepare for admission auditions. If you are unable to have a private instructor, ask your band director to meet with you a couple of times a month.

Preparing For Auditions

College-level auditions are conducted for a variety of reasons. They're one important part of the admissions process. They also help the faculty to assign students to performing groups, and to establish "chair" placement. The importance of these auditions can make them nerve-wracking. Learn to control your nervousness by preparing yourself physically,

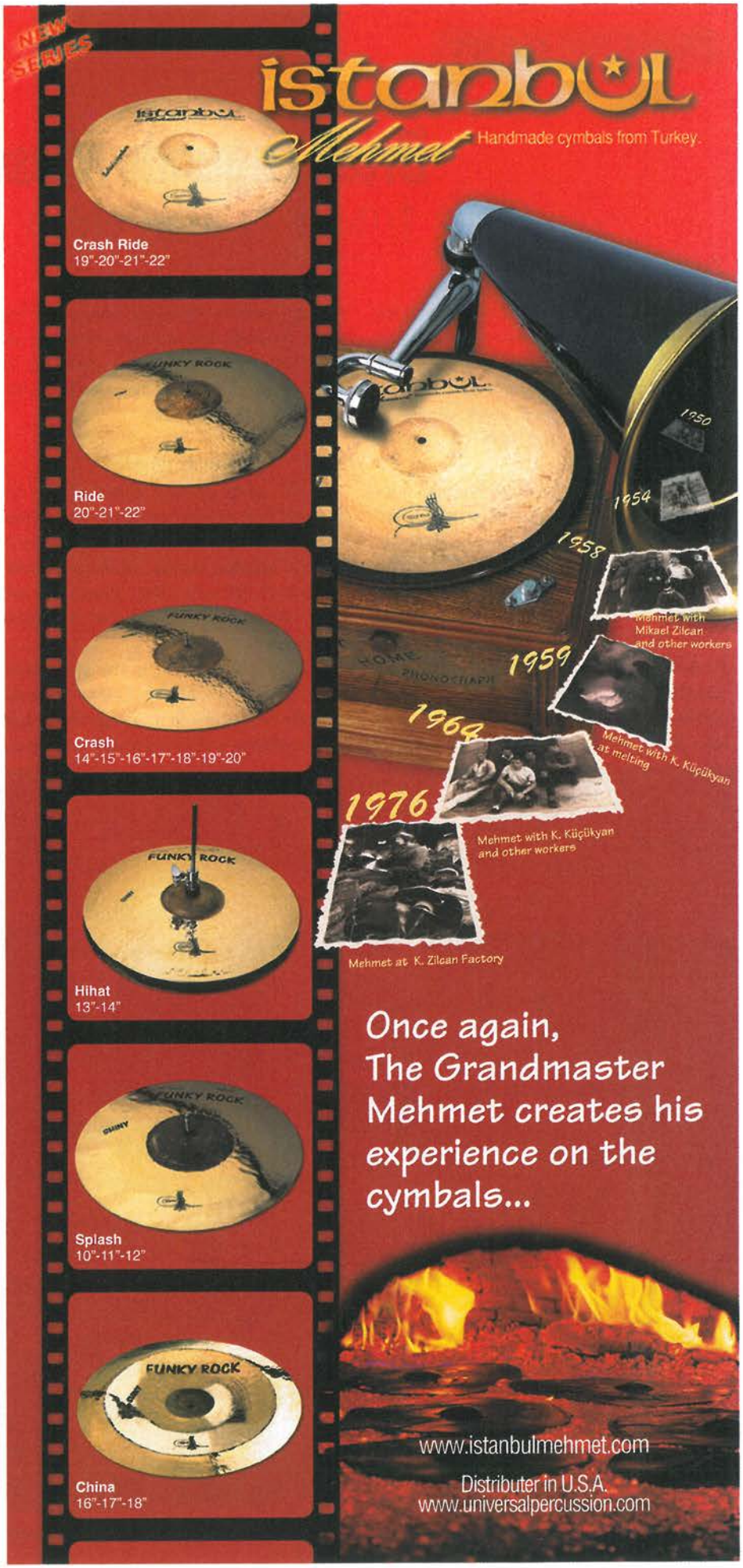
mentally, and emotionally. Also, take advantage of every audition opportunity that comes your way. The more auditions you participate in, the better your auditions will be.

Here's a "preparing for an audition" checklist.

1. Get plenty of rest the night before.
2. Eat healthy food.
3. Drink plenty of water, but remember to use the restroom before the audition.
4. Be clear on what the auditioners want you to do.
5. Dress appropriately.
6. Bring your own snare drum and sticks.
7. Have your prepared piece of music well rehearsed. Better yet, have it memorized.
8. Know the rudiments inside and out. You'll be asked to play some.
9. If you're auditioning on a melodic instrument, bring your own mallets. Be ready to play scales and arpeggios.
10. If you're auditioning on a timpani, bring your own mallets. Also, practice tuning, and then practice tuning some more!
11. If you're auditioning on a drumset, ask if you may use your own cymbals and bass drum pedals. Be ready to demonstrate the following styles: swing, Latin, rock, funk, ballad, samba, jazz waltz, Afro-Cuban, and reggae.
12. Develop your sight-reading skills. Sight-read something every day. During the audition, you *will* be asked to sight-read. You may also be asked to play back rhythms and melodies that are dictated to you.
13. Right before the audition, visualize yourself being calm and performing flawlessly.

Now You're Ready To Load The Van

Following these suggestions won't guarantee your acceptance into a music school. But think of what your chances would be if you don't. Become prepared, so that loading the family van for college *will* be in your future.



Drum Legends Museum

A Tribute To Drumming's Greats

Story and photos by Mike Haid

Drum Legends Museum proprietor Charlie Benton has been gathering rare drums for over thirty years. What began as a hobby has turned into an impressive collection of vintage drums, along with stunning displays of the kits of famous American drummers.

Concord, North Carolina (twenty minutes from Charlotte) is where you'll find the unassuming Drum Legends Museum. "Classes from schools all over the South visit on field trips," says Charlie. "Most of the kids have never heard of Gene Krupa or Buddy Rich. That's a big reason I started this museum, so that we can keep these legendary drummers alive in the hearts and minds of today's young musicians. We can also show them where the art of drumset playing began in American music, and how it has evolved. And we have what we call the 'crash room,' where kids can play on some drums. That's always a popular spot with *future* drum legends."

How It Started

In his youth, Benton played drums for fun—until he became involved in automobile engineering. While on the road as a race car engineer on the NASCAR circuit, he'd search for collectible drum gear, taking a special interest in the kits of famous drummers.

"My biggest mentor is the great drum guru Charlie Donnelly," says Benton. "Charlie started the first vintage drum shop in the country, in Newington, Connecticut. He was a close friend with many of the great drummers, like Krupa and Rich. He still deals in vintage drums out of his home, although he's slowing down because of his age. He is the most knowledgeable person I've ever met in regards to vintage drums. He and his son Chuck have been very helpful in finding vintage kits for me, including the Krupa and Rich kits we now have on display."

So Much To See

Upon entering the 5,000-square-foot Drum Legends Museum, one is immediately overwhelmed by 600 vintage snare drums of every imaginable color, shape, and size. One snare that belonged to Gene Krupa is kept in a separate display. "This

Drum Legends Museum proprietor Charlie Benton stands beside one of his prize exhibits

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Museum exhibits include (clockwise from top left) one of Bun E. Carlos's Cheap Trick kits, several kits from the big band era, a classic Slingerland Buddy Rich kit, over six hundred snare drums, and an unusual "cocktail" stand-up kit from the 1950s.

was Gene's favorite snare drum," claims Benton. "You see it exactly how he left it."

Then there are engaging displays of drumsets from Krupa, Rich, and a host of other jazz and rock heroes. A total of 90 drumsets are on display at any one time, out of a collection of 155 that are presented in rotation. That way there's always something new for repeat visitors to see. A collection of exotic Japanese drum gear has recently been added to the exhibit.

Most displays of famous drummers' kits feature the original gear, including hardware, heads, and cymbals. The kits are set up exactly as the drummers originally used them. Among Benton's most prized possessions are the Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich kits—including Buddy's Fibes snare drum with no air holes or company badge, and Krupa's 20" Slingerland floor tom. Also on display is a Ludwig kit in the model made famous by Ringo Starr (though not Ringo's personal kit), and Ed Shaughnessy's kit from *The Tonight Show*. Other kits on display are Mick Fleetwood's from the *Rumors* sessions, a Bun E. Carlos Cheap Trick kit, Rod Morgenstein's Winger kit, movie-set kits from the film *Shake, Rattle, And Roll*, and the Slingerland kit used on the Broadway set of *The Who's Tommy*. Also on display are sets owned and played by celebrities Louis Armstrong and Alfred Hitchcock.

Benton designed and built all of the displays in the museum, some of which feature three tiers stacked to the ceiling. The Krupa and Rich kits are suspended *from* the ceiling on glass-bottomed displays, with neon lightning bolts illuminating each set. A glass-and-metal veranda-style walkway is filled with Krupa and Rich LP record jackets from Benton's private collection.

And There's Still More

"I visit vintage drum shows and drum shops all over the country," says Benton, "and I'm proud to say that the Drum Legends Museum really is the most well-stocked display of unique and vintage drum gear in the country. It's been a labor of love for me. I took a lot of pride in building a place where drummers could see the gear that inspired a lot of us to start playing drums in the first place. In addition to the drums, all of the memorabilia—like posters, clocks, and banners—are original items. There's not much in this museum that's not the genuine article."

Besides being a museum curator, Charlie Benton is an engineer and a custom drum builder. His shop across the street from the museum holds machines he has created to mold drum shells, cut bearing edges, drill hardware holes, and wrap drums. "One machine allows me to steam wooden shells that are out of round and reshape them back to perfection," Benton explains. "I also design my own hardware: I've created a reinforcement bracket for toms and snare drums called IRAS [Independent Resonant Alignment System]. It can be mounted to any triple-flanged hoop to add strength and resonance to the drum, extend drumhead life, and keep the head in tune." One of Benton's custom kits is on display in the museum's Crash Room.

The Drum Legends Museum also houses a drum store that offers repairs, lessons, clinics, educational materials, and a complete line of drums and accessories from most major manufacturers. There's also a recording room where performances and drum clinics are held.

If your vacation or business trip brings you close to the Charlotte, North Carolina area, it's well worth your while to visit this inspiring tribute to the artists and manufacturers that put drumming on the map. Check the Drum Legends Museum Web site, www.drumlegends.com, or call (704) 721-3111 to schedule a tour.

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Inspiring Bored Students

12 Tips To Keep Their Interest Level High

by Steve Broberg

For those of us who've been playing and teaching drums for a number of years, it seems inconceivable that the drums can be boring. However, for many young students who are new to the instrument, lessons and practicing can become tedious. But there are specific ways drum teachers can make lesson and practice times more enjoyable.

I must make a very important point first off, one that I wish I had understood earlier in my teaching career: Lesson time is *not* practice time. Lesson time is for testing the student on the previous week's material, and for presenting new material. The student does not need to perfect the new material during the lesson; that is what the rest of the week is for. Just enough time should be spent to allow the student to understand what is expected, and to get a firm grasp of the material.

Too often, a student who is struggling with a concept—or who has simply not practiced during the week—can spend the entire lesson time trying to play whatever you assigned for "homework" the week before. However, it's not the teacher's fault when a student is unprepared for a lesson. When a student obviously has not practiced during the week, I simply assign the same material again, work with the student on it, collect my fee, and attempt to impart upon the student and his parents the importance of diligent practice.

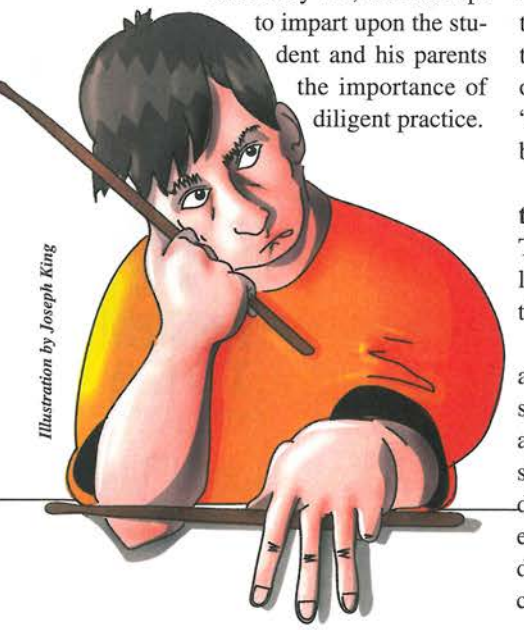

Illustration by Joseph King

So far, the entire process sounds a bit dry. How, then, does the teacher make lesson and practice time more enjoyable and productive for the student?

The Beginning Student

It can be very difficult to keep a complete beginner from getting frustrated with his or her inability to play at a performable level. At this stage, try getting the student excited in aspects of drumming beyond simply playing.

Accentuate the wildness. Usually the reason a person wants to play drums in the first place is because drums are just so darned *cool*. Who doesn't want to be the rowdy guy in the back making all that wonderful noise? Roll with that perception by showing the student pictures of wild drumkits, playing recordings of superb drummers, and recommending movies that feature drummers, like *The Gene Krupa Story* or *That Thing You Do*.

Playing rudiments on a practice pad in order to build chops can get old after about thirty seconds.

Make drum buddies. Have your students seek out other drummers and musicians at school or in their neighborhood. Any type of fellowship among musicians can keep beginners interested in their craft. It allows them to learn from their peers, in addition to their teacher. It's usually not too difficult to spot other musicians. They're the ones scribbling "Zildjian" or "Fender" logos on their notebooks in class.

Expose students to drum shops, exhibitions, clinics, videos, and this magazine. This will inspire them to make the drums a larger part of their lives than just something they do for thirty minutes a week.

My drum teacher, Ron Romano, took me and my friend Marc to a great local drum shop when we were thirteen. We were blown away, not only with all the cool gear Ron showed us, but with the simple fact that our drum teacher would take enough of an interest in his students to spend his own time doing that. It's not included in your paycheck, but little things like that can go a long way for young people. That's the real reason we teach anyway, right?

Practice with pillows. When a beginner is practicing, playing rudiments on a practice pad in order to build chops can get old after about thirty seconds. I've found that a great way to work on chops is to play on a pillow or the carpet while watching TV. You soon forget that you're actually practicing, yet so much can be accomplished just by doing a fast single-stroke roll for ten minutes at a time. The pillow forces the hands to do all the work, thus building the muscles. It also keeps the rest of the family from going crazy with the noise. The more you can keep those sticks in the hands of the student, the better.

The Intermediate Student

Chalk up a big victory any time a student successfully progresses to the intermediate level. Whether the student is a natural prodigy or had to work long and hard to get to this point, a sigh of relief is in order. However, being able to hold one's own behind the skins has in no way taken the student out of the woods. With much to learn in order to continue improving, the intermediate student is still susceptible to boredom and apathy towards practicing.

Play along with recorded music. This is the simplest way to make practicing fun. What inspired me to take up the drums in the first place was when my friend Marc put Rush's "Tom Sawyer" on the record player and told me how rad it would be to be able to play like Neil Peart. I wholeheartedly agreed. A few years had to pass for me to marginally stumble through that song, but the struggle was well worth it.

Ask your students what their favorite bands are, and have them bring some CDs to work with. With songs that the students have listened to over and over, the drum part is pretty well engraved in their minds, and it just takes a little time to get that translated to

the kit. Playing along with CDs can keep a young drummer occupied for hours at a time, especially if this time can be shared with other equally interested drummers.

Jam. Marc and I lived only two houses from each other. We would sometimes set up both our drumkits in one of our houses and spend an entire weekend jamming together. Not only would we play to our records and tapes, we would also conduct "drum battles" and "copy-cat" exercises. We even had a contest to see who could do a double-stroke roll the longest. This again stresses the importance of having other drummer friends to play with, feed off, and learn from. If you have several students, you may want to gather them together in twos or threes for this very purpose.

Join the school band. I started playing drums in our school band in fifth grade, and continued through junior high. One of my biggest regrets regarding my drumming career is that I did not continue with high school band. Regardless of a student's musical tastes, marching, orchestra, or jazz band will teach invaluable techniques and riffs that can be applied to any style of playing. My brother, Scott, played snare in an amazing drum line in high school. That gave him some incredible chops on the drumkit. Twenty years later he still has those chops. I may have missed out on the full benefits of school band, but I strongly encourage my students not to miss their opportunity.

Setup experiments. One thing that I used to have fun with as a young drummer was experimenting with my kit's arrangement. Normally, I have a pretty good slant to my toms, but sometimes I'd lay them flat like Stewart Copeland's just for kicks. Or I would switch off between having my cymbals just a few inches above the toms and having them so high they were almost out of reach.

These experiments serve a couple of purposes: They help students to determine exactly how they are most comfortable with their setup, and they expand flexibility and accuracy of movement around the kit. Besides, it's just plain fun to mess with drums!

The Advanced Student

At this point, the student has most if not all the tools necessary to move on to greatness. There are, however, more avenues to take that will help facilitate that move.

Start a band. School band is one thing, but the ultimate thrill in this regard is having one's own band. When you have a room (or

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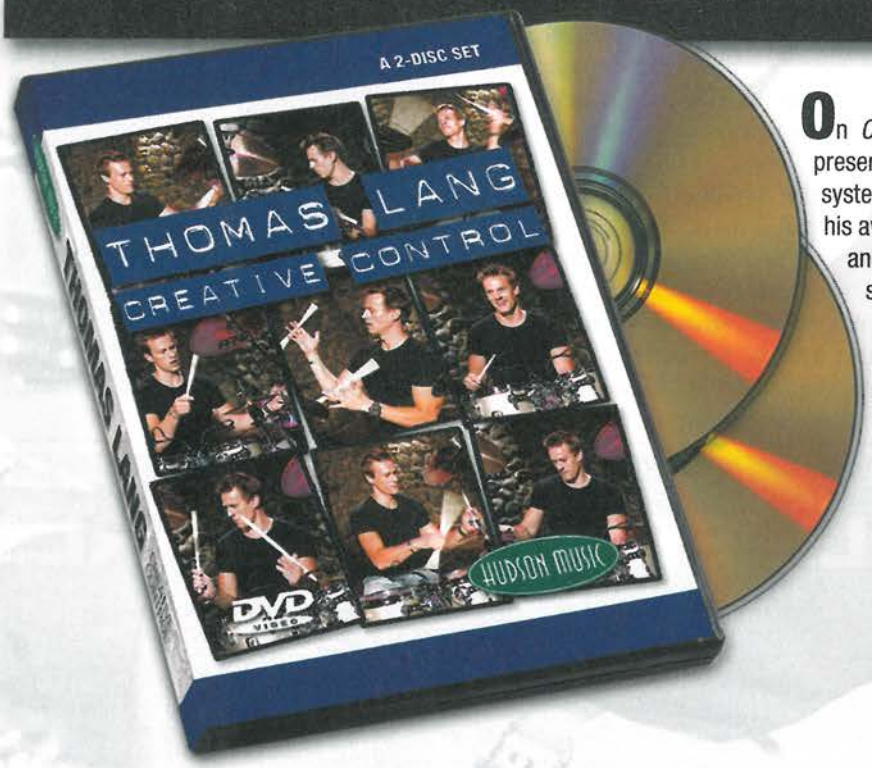

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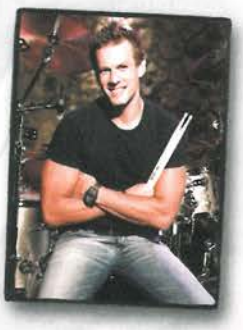

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garage) full of real live people playing songs together, you realize why you've been working so hard and long, smacking that pillow in front of the TV. And when you can pool your creative minds and start writing your own material, look out!

Exercise the brain—hard. Have your students do the Carter Beauford thing and switch their lead hands now and again. Have them try some funky polyrhythms between limbs, with paradiddles, threes-against-fours, twos-against-threes, or anything else that hurts the brain to even think about, let alone play. Go so far as to have them switch their kit completely backwards (right-handed to left, and vice versa) and play that way for a week. I nearly drove one of my students to tears with the almost-impossible polyrhythmic patterns I gave him to develop his limb independence. But he *loved* it.

Learn another instrument. "Wax on, wax off," and "Paint the fence," Mr. Miyagi taught his young apprentice in *The Karate Kid*. What did this have to do with karate? Plenty. In the same way, practicing drums isn't the only way to get better at the drums. Once a student becomes proficient at any instrument, it's time to learn another. Several years after I began playing the drums, I picked up a guitar. The rhythmic aspect of music-making was by this time innate, so I only had to learn the fingering.

Not only did my years of drumming help my guitar playing, my guitar playing also helped my drumming. I gained valuable insight into music theory, song structure, dynamics, and musical subtleties that I was then able to translate to the drums. Any additional instrument will do, as long as the student is motivated to learn it. In other words, don't force those accordion lessons just because of your love of Weird Al Yankovic.

Pass it on. An advanced student ought to teach. I believe that it's our duty to pass knowledge on to the next generation. Besides, those who teach will always come away from the experience knowing more about the subject than before.

I sincerely hope that these ideas will help you drum teachers to better engage your students in their pursuit of drumming excellence. They've helped my students a great deal, and, as my last tip suggests, they've also helped me. Good luck, and good drumming to you all.

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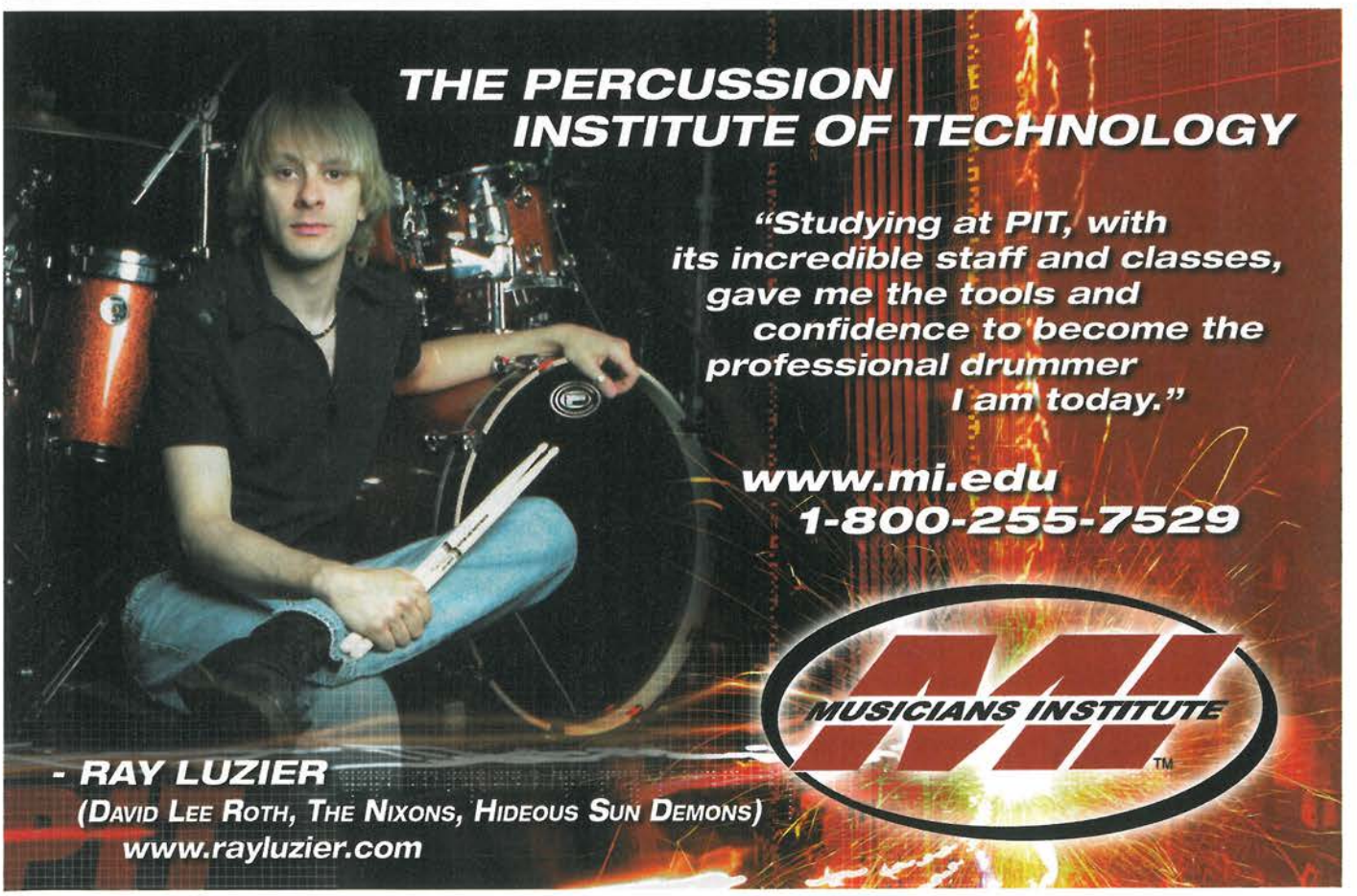

Andrew Hewitt

Thirty-three-year-old Andrew Hewitt hails from Sydney, Australia. Despite being born with cerebral palsy, Andrew has been playing drums since the age of ten. "My parents bought me a kit thinking it could be good physical exercise for me," says Andrew. "I stuck with it, and I've been playing at a semi-pro level since the late 1980s."

Andrew describes his drumming style as mostly hard rock and blues. He cites influences including John Bonham, Phil Rudd, and his particular hero, Rick Allen. "The guy is amazing," says Andrew. "He lost an arm in a car accident in the mid-'80s, and now look at where Def Leppard are sitting."

Andrew also credits the support of his drum teachers, including Scott Bird (ex-Pale Riders), Ashley Davies (Ashley Davies/Matt Walker Duo, Mighty Servant, Wild Pumpkins At Midnight), and Tubby Waddsworth (ex-Massappeal, Killing Time, The Harlots). "They're all well-known drummers in Australia," says Andrew. "I wouldn't be where I am today without them."

Andrew has been playing regularly at blues jams throughout Sydney. "The crowd response—along with praise from other musicians—has been awesome," he reports. "Nobody thinks of me as a 'disabled' drummer. I'm just doing what I know best, and I'm no different from any other drummer who gets up on that stage." Andrew is currently looking for a Sydney-based original alternative/hard rock band that has the same ambition and drive that he has.

Besides gigging, Andrew puts his efforts into other aspects of drumming. "Because of my CP," he says, "I have a problem getting the power out of my feet to really drive the kick drum. So I'm looking into different ways to use electronics on my acoustic drumkit. At the same time, I've been thinking about holding drum and percussion workshops for kids with disabilities. I think that my success on drums could be a motivation for them. I'd love to show people that anything is possible, and encourage them to follow their dreams and let nothing stand in their way. Life is too short to sit back and feel sorry for yourself. I have ambitions to take my drumming career as high as it can go, and I'm not going to give up until I reach my goals." Andrew's Web site is www.drummerstix.com.au.

Lisa McKean

Lisa McKean has been playing drums for more than half of her thirty-four years. The Hamilton, Ontario, Canada native describes herself as primarily a country drummer, although she's performed in many different styles over the years. Diverse influences like John Bonham, Kenny Aronoff, J.R. Robinson, and Steve Smith have contributed to her versatility.

Lisa began her professional career by touring with singer/songwriter John Ellison. After leading several of her own bands and playing for two years on Carnivale cruises, she moved on to her current gig with country/rock legend Ronnie Hawkins (a gig held in the '60s by The Band's legendary Levon Helm). When not touring with Ronnie, Lisa plays with a number of local bands, as well as doing studio projects.

"My ultimate goal," says Lisa, "is to play drums for some of the biggest names in country music." Her demo tape gives ample evidence of the solid groove and tasteful creativity necessary for Lisa to meet that goal. She performs on a vintage Gretsch kit with an Ayotte woodhoop snare and Sabian cymbals. She also endorses Headhunter (formerly Powertip) drumsticks.

Ganesh Anandan

Indian-born Ganesh Anandan has immersed himself for over twenty years in the study and performance of South Indian and other world percussion rhythms. In that time he has developed his knowledge and skill, including participation in workshops with such hand-drumming stars as Glen Velez, Allesandra Belloni, and Carlo Rizzo.

Since 1994 Ganesh has been transposing South Indian rhythmic concepts onto tambourines, frame drums, and alternative surfaces. He has developed a playing style that combines the karnatic method with a variety of personal finger-drumming innovations. In 1998 he founded FingerWorks, a trio of frame drummers dedicated to hand and finger percussion music. He wrote compositions for the trio, and invited guest artists Glen Velez (1999), Carlo Rizzo (2001), and Remesh Shotham (2001) to perform with the group.

Ganesh has recently recorded two CDs. *Imaginaria* pairs Ganesh with multi-instrumentalist Patrick Graham, in a duo called Ga Pa. They play original music that employs an array of percussion and "invented" instruments. *Speaking In Tongues* is the self-titled CD by a new music trio featuring Ganesh with violinist Malcolm Goldstein and guitarist Rainer Wiens. It combines elements of Indian music with contemporary music and jazz. Information on both CDs is available at www.fingerworks.org.

Ganesh is tireless in his efforts to promote world music, finger percussion, and alternative instruments to a greater audience. His most recent project involved composing and performing with Germany's Ensemble Modern at venues in Frankfurt and Berlin.

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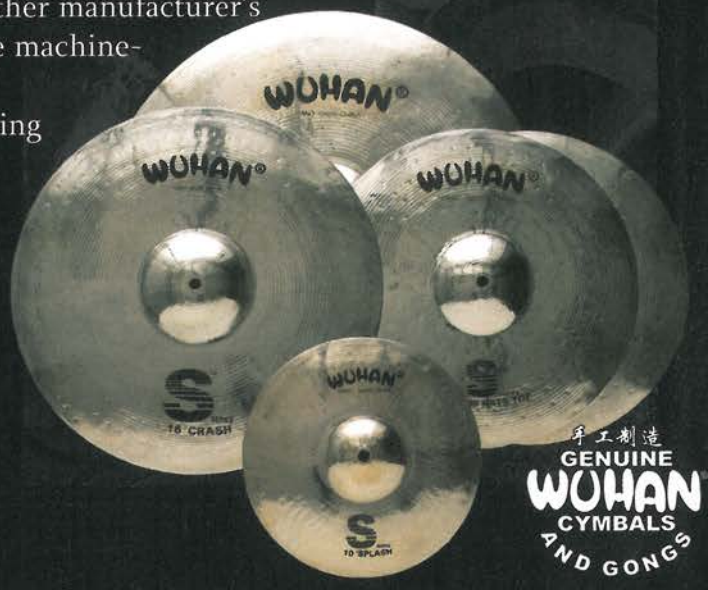

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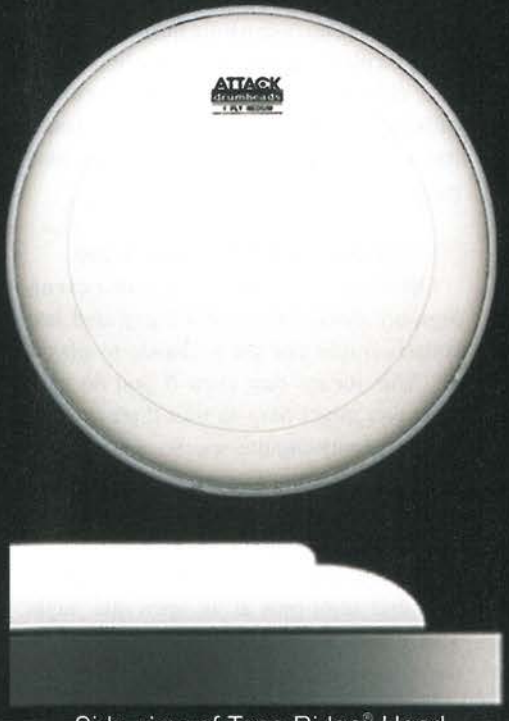

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ATTACK drumheads

Cutting It At Open-Mic' Night

Get Set To Sit In

by Michael Sandler

You jump onto the stage, your chest booming, your head buzzing in anticipation of laying down the groove for a fired-up crowd that wants to do some serious dancing. You know the feeling of power when your drumming makes people move. It's going to happen tonight.

You sit down behind a set of drums you've never touched before. Or rather, you try to sit. Whoever last played the kit must be seven feet tall, because the throne is as high as your waist and the ride cymbal is in another zip code. Just as you're trying to find some room among the cords and floor toms to slide the ride closer, a fifty-something sax blower in tinted glasses and a turtleneck turns to you and says, "Hard bop...290...you know, like Max. Three, four!"

You wake up in a sweat.

Open-mic' nights (also known as sit-in nights or jam sessions) can be a nightmare for musicians and audiences alike. But that's part of the thrill. There is no more seat-of-the-pants musical experience than getting up on a stage with four or five people you've never met and making music on the spot. The results are sometimes embarrassing, sometimes mediocre, sometimes transcendent. But no matter what happens, you'll walk away a better player.

There is no more seat-of-the-pants musical experience than getting up on a stage and making music on the spot.

As a regular on my local open-mic' scene for a few years now, I've had a range of experiences, from being utterly humiliated to being lifted out of time and space. Along the way, I figured out a few things that you might find helpful if you want to take the plunge into your own open-mic' scene.

Know What You're Getting Into

Open-mic' jams are often devoted to a particular style of music. Sometimes this focus is strict. For example, trying to play "Enter Sandman" at a blues-only jam will likely get you more frowns than accolades. On the other hand, some jams are wide open, allowing any kind of music. Find out ahead of time what is expected and what is not.

Know The Basics Of The Genre

Any genre of music has certain stylistic rudiments that you must master (or at least be able to bluff your way through). If you go to a blues jam, know what a 12-bar blues is. In fact, you should know the blues no matter what kind of jam it is. A good group of players, an agreed-upon key, and a tempo are all you need to get a 12-bar blues off the ground, so you hear a lot of blues when musicians are playing "off the cuff." While you don't need to know the chords of a I-IV-V progression in every key, you should know where the changes are and be sensitive to the genre's dynamic range.

If you plan to go to a rock jam, brush up on your classic-rock repertoire. When someone calls out "Rock And Roll," will you launch into it with confidence? If it's an anything-goes format, are you ready for *anything*?

Make Use Of Waiting Time

Open-mic' jams can be crowded events. Sign-up sheets fill up in a hurry, and latecomers might not get a chance to play at all. This means that even if you do get a turn, you might have to wait three hours to play a twenty-minute set. So what do you do for these three hours, other than make trips to the bar? *Listen*. Chances are there are some top-drawer musicians in your town. You might even catch some regional pros and semi-pros at an open-mic' night. This means you get to see a virtual festival for no charge.

Hanging around waiting to play is also a great way to make connections. Whether

for professional advancement or just to start a garage band, the local open-mic' night is a chance to rub elbows with the best players in town. Say hi and schmooze a bit, and you might find yourself in a band.

Be Prepared To Solo

Some drummers savor the chance to take the spotlight from the singer or guitarist for a few minutes. Other drummers cringe at the idea of playing a solo. But whatever you think about soloing, at an open jam you'd better be ready for someone to turn around and point at you. You're on.

If you suddenly find yourself playing a solo at a jam session, remember two things: First, keep the beat going. Audiences usually come out to jam sessions to drink and hear some free music they can dance to. It's a huge rush for everyone as midnight rolls around and the dance floor is packed with gyrating bodies. Maintain that vibe. This is no time for your note-for-note rendition of "Moby Dick." Stuff like jungle toms, funky rhythms, and splashy cymbal accents will keep everyone much happier than an excursion into the avant-garde.

Speaking of "Moby Dick," soloing rule number two is to keep it short. Remember, you only have about twenty minutes...not for your solo, but for the entire set. Don't eat up everyone else's playing time with a self-indulgent drum orgy.

Have Fun!

Music is fun, remember? Worrying too much about how well you'll play turns music into drudgery. Most of the playing you hear at an open-mic' night is going to be a bit ragged anyway. This is improvisation, often done by people who have never met before. A few missed downbeats or unintentional stick clicks will probably go unnoticed. What will be noticed is whether or not you have a genuine smile on your face. Musicians and audiences alike are here for a good time. Nobody is getting paid. Forget your polish, and *play*. You just might play better than you ever have.

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"I used to get into arguments with a drummer I know. He would say that drumming is math, and I would say that drumming is poetry. We'd argue about that to no end."

The Fire Theft's William Goldsmith

Answering Back

Story by Gail Worley • Photos by Maury Duchamp

When a band's debut album is held accountable for single-handedly launching a musical movement, it can be a heavy cross to bear. Just ask the members of Seattle's Sunny Day Real Estate. Many critics and fans credit the emotional immediacy of 1994's *Diary* with laying the foundation for what we now call emo rock. Some particularly zealous fans—and Sunny Day had them in *droves*—might even say *Diary* is an album that changed their lives. Yeah, heavy. After seven years, five albums, the loss of a bassist, and a mid-career breakup, Sunny Day Real Estate split up for good in 2001. Well, sort of.

Enter The Fire Theft, a Sunny Day reincarnation comprised of founding singer/songwriter Jeremy Enigk and drummer extraordinaire William Goldsmith. Also included in the mix is onetime SDRE bassist Nate Mendel, who originally left Sunny Day in 1995 to join Foo Fighters. (Goldsmith was also briefly a member of Foo Fighters, but left soon after the band's debut album was released due to artistic differences with Dave Grohl. William prefers not to talk about it.)

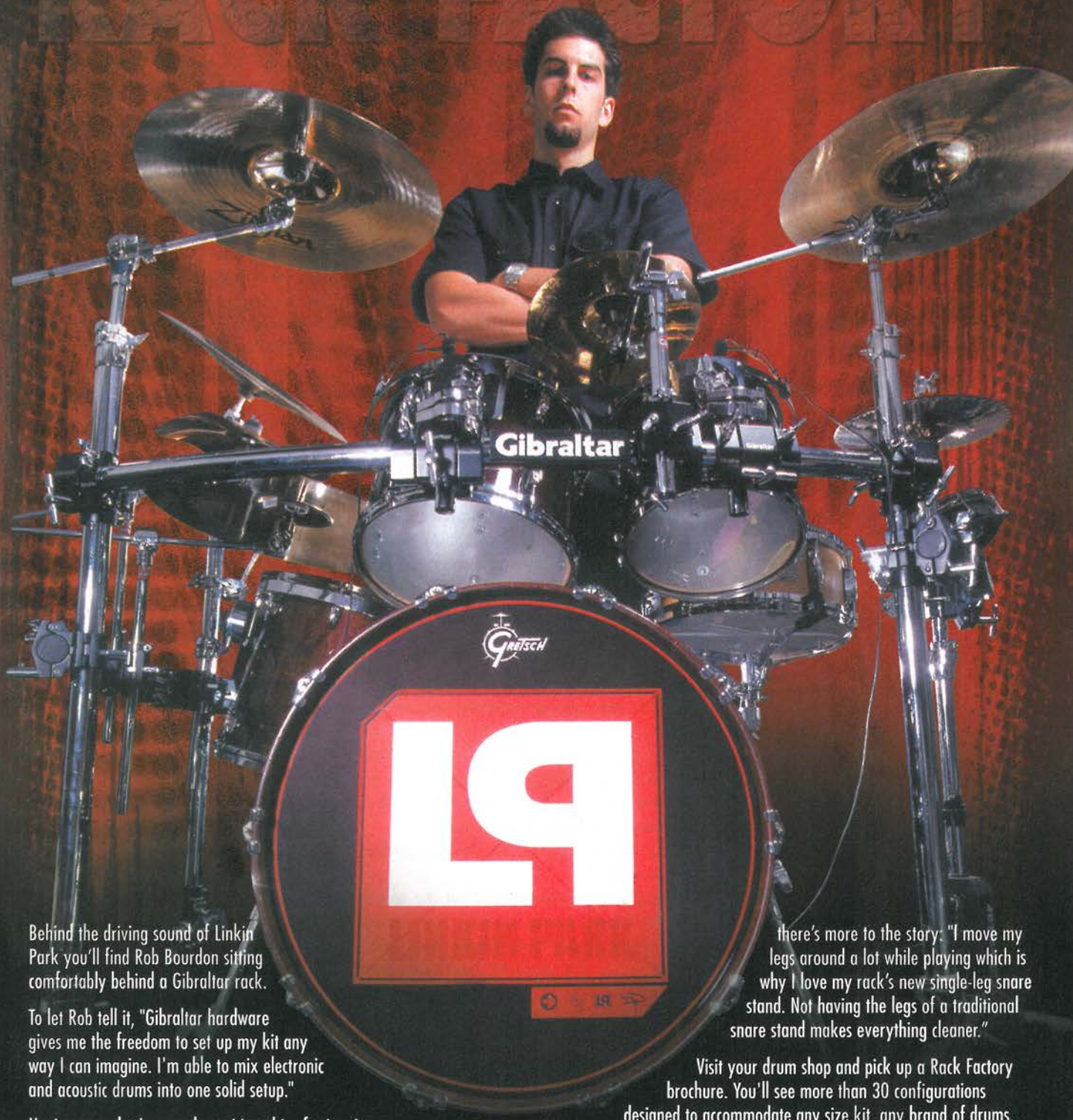
With three core members of Sunny Day on board, The Fire Theft's 2003 debut isn't too many steps from SDRE's swan song, 2000's *The Rising Tide*. Over the course of the twelve tracks on *The Fire Theft*, classic *Pet Sounds*-inspired pop mingles with a serious level of prog-rock influences. These include the orchestral interludes of ELO, the atmospheric grandeur of Pink Floyd, the epic, multi-part compositions of early Genesis, and Jeremy Enigk's unmistakable Peter Gabriel-meets-Perry Farrell pinpoint-pitch vocals. And Goldsmith continues to paint a richly hued musical portrait in every moment of sound emanating from his kit.

William started playing drums at age thirteen, inspired by an older brother who also played drums. "As a young kid," William recalls, "I'd see the beater hit the bass drum, and it felt like the most powerful thing ever."

William's brother also introduced him to bands like Led Zeppelin and The Who. "When he played me *Quadrophenia* and air-drummed to the whole record, *that* was when my life changed," William admits. "I then rented the video of *The Kids Are Alright* and watched it over and over. I was so moved and inspired by watching Keith Moon that I had to answer. Once I got my own drumkit, I went crazy. I was very influenced by Keith Moon and John Bonham as a young kid."

The Moon and Bonzo influences, it seems, are deeply ingrained in the thirty-one-year-old drummer. "For *The Fire Theft*, we were all inspired by albums like *Quadrophenia*, *Physical Graffiti*, and *Dark Side Of The Moon*," William says. "I actually slipped *Quadrophenia* under Jeremy's door right before we started composing, and it became his favorite record. That album," he laughs, "is just so *rad*."

Rob Bourdon.
The driving force behind Linkin Park.



Behind the driving sound of Linkin Park you'll find Rob Bourdon sitting comfortably behind a Gibraltar rack.

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MD: In 2000, you had serious problems with carpal tunnel syndrome, tendinitis, and bursitis that greatly affected your ability to play. What happened, and how did you recover from those ailments?

William: I believe these problems started because I never took lessons and therefore never learned proper technique. Eventually I developed serious shoulder pain, to the point where I was unable to lift my arms. It's been a long journey to recovery.

Initially I studied a very intense type of yoga called bikram, which helped but didn't really alleviate my shoulder problems. At that time I was also having acupuncture treatments. I went from yoga into heavy martial arts training. I definitely needed something besides music to cross-train with, and I found that martial arts practice equaled music, as far as how it moved and inspired me. Unfortunately, I couldn't lift my arms while doing the martial arts either.

It was getting worse, so I began going for "rolfing" sessions [a deep connective tissue massage also known as "structural integration"] in conjunction with seven months of daily physical therapy. I've been rolfed sixty times. Still, the pain was just insane. The fact that none of these physical modalities helped me was very frustrating. My body just wouldn't heal.

Through all of this, I'd started paying attention to my diet and began drinking wheat grass juice daily. I found this juice bar in Seattle, and the owner turned me on to an organic herbal detoxifier. It's not a colonic, but something taken internally that cleans out and strengthens your digestive system. Two weeks after starting that regimen, the shoulder pain I'd been struggling with for nearly a decade disappeared—and it hasn't returned. I'm not sure why the herbal remedy worked, but my theory is that when your digestive system is strong, the body's natural healing powers kick into high gear. Although I learned many ways to improve my body and mind while looking for a way to alleviate this pain, out of everything I tried, it's funny that it came down to this.

MD: How did you continue to play while you were in so much pain?

William: In a weird way, being restricted in my movements encouraged me to change the way I was playing. Since I wasn't able to do certain things, I'd actually play more like I'm playing *now*. It forced me to keep my shoulders and arms down unless I really needed to pick them up. I was playing regular beats with my shoulders rolled forward and down, when they need to be *back* and down, in a relaxed position. Now I don't have the pain, and I can lift my arms and go crazy whenever I want. From all of this, I've learned how to be more relaxed and pick my moments.

MD: How have you modified your technique to avoid re-injury?

William: Beyond trying to keep my shoulders down, I'm paying closer attention to my grip. Instead of turning my hand to the side, I keep it more upright with my thumb on top and my fingers cradling the stick underneath. Also, even if I'm hitting hard, I'm a lot more relaxed while playing than I was. Martial arts have helped condition my body to handle strenuous playing, and it's boosted my endurance level through the roof. I used to get winded while playing. Now I rarely get tired, unless we're playing at a high altitude.

MD: What advice would you give other drummers on how to stay healthy and avoid acquiring habits that can lead to injury?

William: If I'd just taken lessons, none of this would have happened. When I meet drummers who have similar problems, I do

William's Kit

Drums: vintage Slingerland in white marine pearl
- **A.** 6½x15 Keplinger stainless steel snare
- **B.** 10x14 tom
- **C.** 16x16 floor tom
- **D.** 14x24 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian
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3. 22" K medium ride
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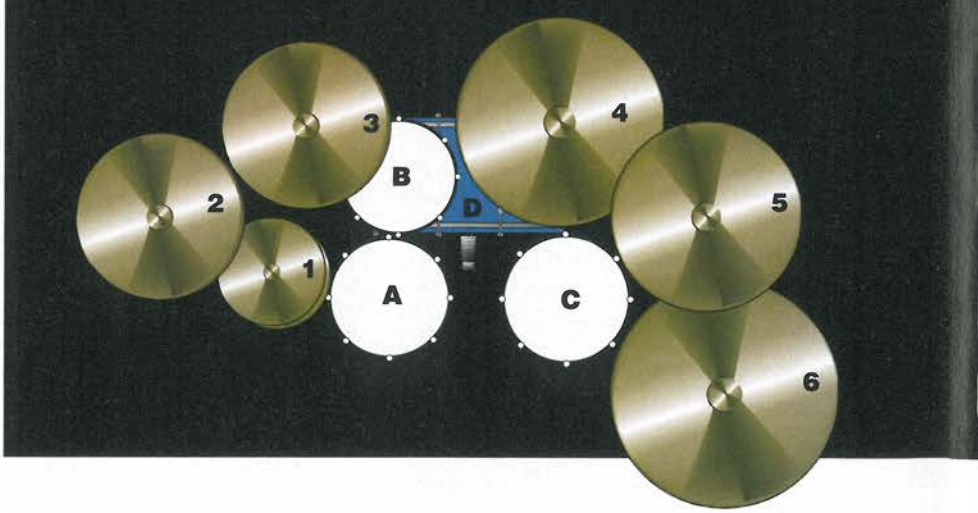
5. 24" K medium ride
6. 30" K medium ride

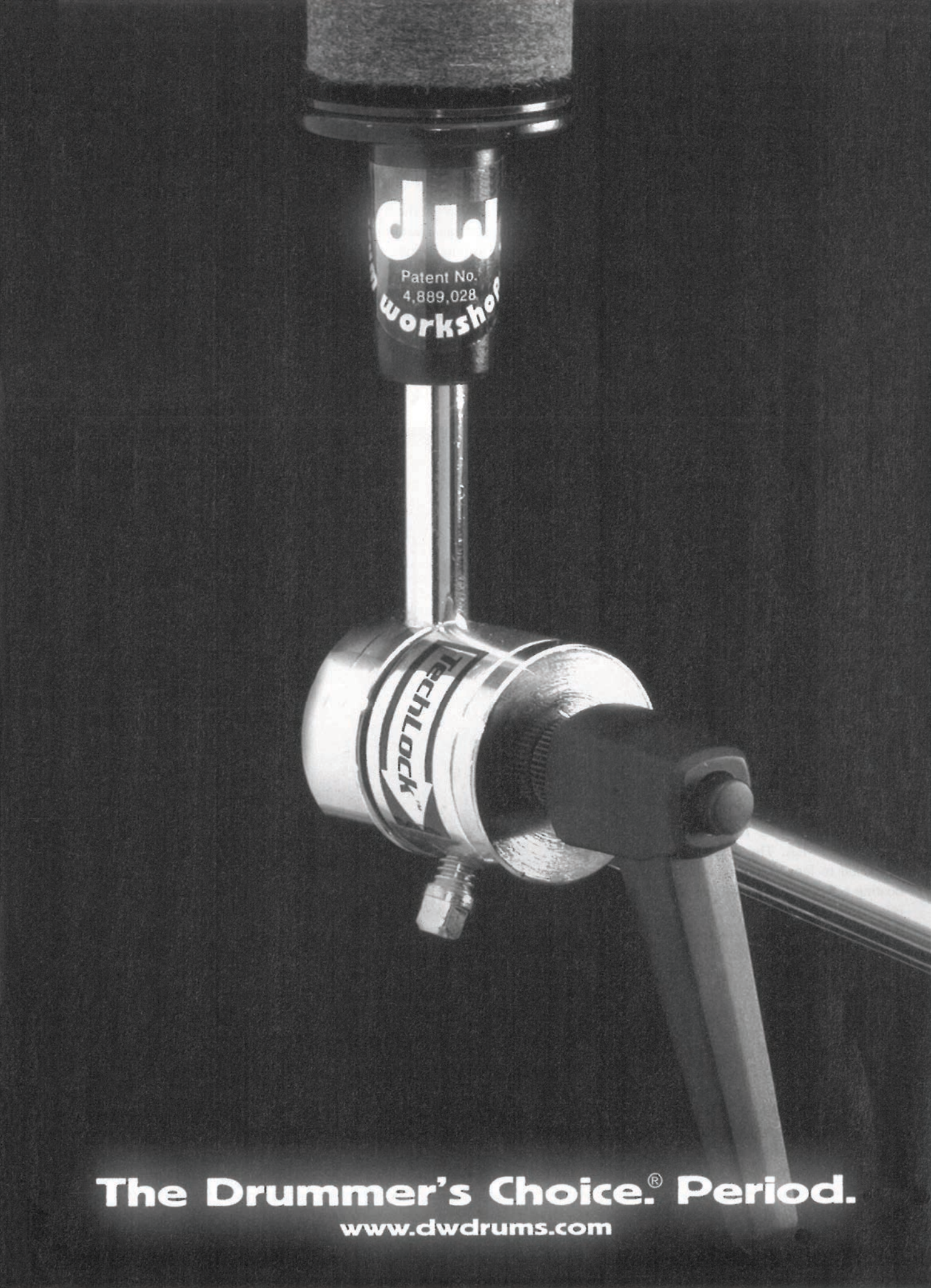
Hardware: Yamaha and DW, including a DW 7000 series single pedal (spring tension "relatively loose, and with a lot of throw")

Heads: Aquarian coated Response II on snare batter, Classic Clear on bottom (loose tuning on batter, tight bottom head, loose snares), coated Response II on tom batters with Classic Clears on bottoms (loose tops, tight bottoms, "so they sing"), coated Satin Finish on front and back of bass drum (no hole, no muffling)

Sticks: Pro-Mark 2B (oak, wood tip) or Vic Firth Kenny Aronoff model

On-Stage Miking: Sennheiser E602 on kick, Shure SM57 on rack, Sennheiser MD421 on floor, two AKG 451s for overheads (one vintage, one reissue), no snare mic'.

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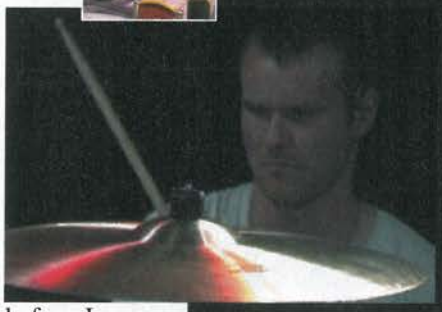
suggest they take lessons. Just make sure it doesn't affect your individual self-expression. Don't ever forget the drummers who inspired you to the point where you felt the need to answer back. For drummers having grip-related problems, I suggest adjusting their stick position. And it doesn't hurt to try being healthier. I recommend adopting a regular exercise routine outside of drumming, something that's also spiritually enhancing that will help you learn to turn your mind off.

MD: Who are some of your contemporary influences?

William: My biggest contemporary influence is Mac McNeilly from The Jesus Lizard, followed by Dale Crover from The Melvins, Elvin Jones, Art Blakey, Jason McGerr from Death Cab For Cutie, and Joe Plummer from Black Heart Procession. But probably my biggest drumming *comrade* was a guy named Scott Jernigan, who played in a band called Karp. Scott and I became very close friends. I remember he came up to me once and said [lowers voice], "I'm Bill Ward and you're John Bonham. Let's start a two-drummer band!" It was like we were kids saying, "I'll be Superman, you be Batman, and we'll go play 'superheroes.'"



Scott and I were going to start a two-drummer project once he got home from being on tour and I got back from recording *The Fire Theft* in LA. The day before I was supposed to leave, Scott was killed in a boating accident. But he was a really powerful drummer, a heavy-hitter who also was the most tasteful double kick drummer I've heard. I'm sure Scotty would have made a major impact. He was a huge inspiration to me, and still is.

MD: Let's talk about your equipment. You seem to favor large drums and cymbals.

William: I've played Ayotte drums for a while. But I've recently been playing a Slingerland kit that was built in 1970. I also use a 15" Keplinger snare. As for cymbals, I use Zildjians—14" hats, a 22" K Custom dark ride on my far left, a 22" medium ride on my near left, a 28" medium-thin ride on my right, a 24" medium ride on my upper right, and a 30" ride on my far right.

MD: That's a lot of metal. I noticed that you seem to use your cymbals as almost a separate entity from the kit. What's that about?

William: For me, if you get the right cymbal combination, you can create an atmospheric space. And as long as they aren't too thick and shrill, I like the way big cymbals shimmer, dance, and respond. You can almost glide or "surf" on them. I don't know if I can really articulate it, but it's just an atmospheric wash, like a gong being struck while you're playing. It's part of my personality coming through my instrument.

MD: When you went in to record the *Fire Theft* album, what kind of drum sound were you going for?

William: We recorded the drums in my basement studio—which is tiny and has a low ceiling—but we got these great drum sounds. I recorded half the record on a Ludwig Vistalite set, a bicentennial red, white & blue striped kit that had a very rattling sound. I used my big Ayotte kit for the other half of the record. I went in wanting to get really great, heavy drum sounds—*real* drum sounds. Some producers might say, "The drums sound good, but I've got this trigger that could make them sound even better." [laughs] I didn't want to do that.

Brad Wood, who produced the record along with us, Greg Keplinger, and I all worked on the drum sounds. I just wanted to get a big but not bombastic drum sound—heavy, but appropriate and tasteful—where the drum parts didn't overwhelm the songs.

MD: Did you consider using any electronics or programming?

William: Actually, we did. Before we started recording, Jeremy encouraged me to spend *hours* in the studio programming beats with this little drum machine and playing with a Roland synthesizer. I was just fooling around with sounds and with the pitch of the drums, like making the pitch of the bass drum really low. I had a great time with that, and Jeremy really wanted it to be a big part of the record. But when it came down to recording, and we chose these songs, I wanted to do everything organically on the drums. That programmed approach is something we'll experiment with in the future. We're not going to become Flock Of Seagulls or anything [laughs], but I had a lot of fun experimenting.

MD: With Brad Wood also being a drummer, did he make suggestions or help you write any drum parts?

William: He and I worked together on arranging two songs, "It's Over" and

Mining Gold

Recordings

Artist	Album
The Fire Theft	The Fire Theft
Sunny Day Real Estate	Diary
Sunny Day Real Estate	LP2 (The Pink Record)
Sunny Day Real Estate	How It Feels To Be Something On
Sunny Day Real Estate	The Rising Tide

Favorites

Artist	Album	Drummer
The Who	Quadrophenia	Keith Moon
Led Zeppelin	Presence	John Bonham
Jimi Hendrix	Axis: Bold As Love	Mitch Mitchell
Ornette Coleman	The Shape Of Jazz To Come	Billy Higgins
Karp	all	Scott Jernigan
Lung Fish	Talking Songs For Walking	Mitchell Feldstein
DJ Shadow	Endtroducing...	various samples
The Jesus Lizard	Goat	Mac McNeilly
The Jesus Lizard	Liar	Mac McNeilly
The Meters	Look-Ka Py Py	Zigaboo Modeliste

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"Summertime," to the point where he was almost a member of the band. Those two songs are where he made the most suggestions, and we came up with ideas for drum parts together. Aside from that, he's a pretty hands-off guy; he just pushes record and says, Go to town.

Brad recorded the first two SDRE records. I remember when we were recording *The Pink Record*, he'd say, "Man, can you just stop doing so many fills?" [laughs] But Brad really understands where I'm trying to go, which is good. Working with him is like working with an older brother.

MD: How do you get such a good sound from your drums, especially your toms?

William: I don't really have a specific technique for tuning my drums. It's something I do through osmosis, from being around Greg Keplinger and watching what he does. I always keep the bottom head a bit tighter than the top, and I don't have a hole in my front bass drum head. I don't plant the beater on the kick drum anymore either. I bounce it off of the head so the whole drum resonates. Also, I used to hit the toms so hard that I was choking them. Now I'm trying to hit with more of a snap, to get the drums to sing.

MD: You create an intense tribal groove, even playing just one tom. What do you attribute that to?

William: It's a similar drum groove that I've played on both *How It Feels To Be Something On* and *The Rising Tide*—something I bring back on purpose. I think I'm trying to send a message somewhere, but I haven't figured out what it is. [laughs] There's just something that has compelled me to do a few things throughout the years, almost thematically.

All of these songs are fun to play and challenging in their own way, in a sense of trying to really focus on the pocket, focus on the groove, and lay back and shut off my mind.

MD: What's the key to creating the sense of space that you make in this music?

William: I'm all about the fact that it's the space *between* the notes that creates a song. Openness is something I really emphasize, and it goes along with concentrating on driving the songs, letting the music speak, and in turn allowing your instrument to become really musical. I don't want to necessarily come off as a "less is more" guy. It's just about letting the song and the drums breathe.

There are tons of drummers who've tapped into the same thing. For many, it's something that happens through maturity, where you just really want to push the music, push the essence of the melody, and become a part of it. I definitely have a sense of expressing from my soul. That's a very honest thing.

I used to get into arguments with a drummer I know. He would say that drumming is math, and I would say that drumming is poetry. We'd argue about that to no end. [laughs] To me, it's all about responding to the music and really letting a human being come through the instrument. There's something more spiritual, powerful, and poetic to drumming than just hitting things with sticks. Although it *is* very primal in that sense, it's also tapped into the essence of evolution. Drumming is a beautiful thing if you let it be.

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The Name Game

New Models For Paiste Signature And 2002 Classic Lines

Paiste's Signature series has been expanded with a 19" Full crash and 21" Full and Silver Mellow rides. Signature cymbals feature Paiste's patented Signature Bronze alloy, and are said to be rich, full, and versatile.

A recent surge in popularity of Paiste's 2002 Classic line has led the company to enlarge that series as well, with Power crash (16", 18", and 20") and Thin crash (16", 17", 18", 19", and 20") models. The 2002 Classic alloy is said to produce an explosive Power crash sound and a versatile Thin crash sound. The larger Thin crashes in particular are a response to drummers who need large crash cymbals for patterned playing to fill sound spaces.

(800) 472-4783, www.paiste.com.

21" Signature Silver Mellow Ride

18" 2002 Power Crash and Thin Crash

Multi-Purpose Minimalism

Remo TSS Drum System

According to Remo, their advanced TSS Drum System represents more than just a major refinement of the company's drumhead and Sound Shape technologies. TSS drums provide "an articulate yet resonant sound with applications from marching (field and pit) and concert (large and small ensembles) to drumset (studio and live) and classroom situations."

The new drums feature a combination of Remo drumheads and newly designed aluminum-alloy components. They're available in two tunable versions, including six standard and four high-tension models. Standard-style TSS drums are recommended for most applications and are equipped with a Suede Emperor head mounted in a one-piece Acousticon counterhoop and supported by an aluminum bearing edge and tension-screw receiver hoop. For more extreme applications, high-tension TSS drums include a marching-style Black Max drumhead, as well as an aluminum top counterhoop for increased strength, stability, and tuning range.

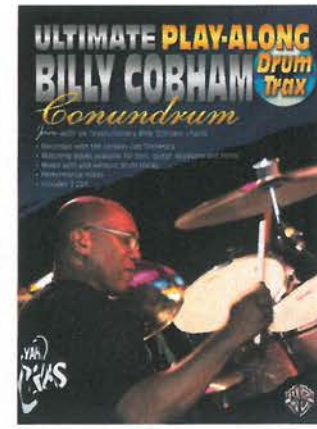
The drums are said to be versatile and compact. A set of high-tension TSS quads on a marching harness or a TSS-equipped marching snare drum would be roughly half the weight of conventional drums. The same thing is true of snare-equipped TSS drums that can be mounted on cymbal stands, hi-hats, and even other drums.

Snare-wire conversion kits will be offered as upgrades for 6"–14" TSS drums. Accessories will include foam inserts that muffle the drums for practicing, as well as mounts, brackets, stands, harnesses, and arms to facilitate their use as stand-alone, cluster, or add-on drums. Modifications will be easy to accomplish with modular drumshell inserts and sound reflectors, plus a wide range of Remo drumheads.

(661) 294-5600, www.remo.com.

A Triple Play?

Billy Cobham Conundrum Play-Along Book/CD



Borrowing a term from our national pastime, Billy Cobham's *Conundrum* is a "triple play" for jazz drummers of all experience levels. Part of Warner Bros. Publications' Play-Along Drum Trax series, Billy's instructional book/CD set allows drummers to learn and absorb its lessons in three ways: Performance notes offer Cobham's thoughts and feelings about the creative process and cultural influences behind each selection in the book. Just For Drums notes share his technical insights on performing each piece of music. And two accompanying CDs give students the opportunity to hear and play along with musical selections with and without the drum parts.

The play-along package features six selections from Cobham's classic *Spectrum* album, rearranged for a jazz orchestra. The selections' deep funk and hard rock grooves pack as much improvisation as they do power. Suggested retail price is $19.95.

(800) 327-7643, www.warnerbrospublications.com.

They Always Want More...

Vater Xtreme Design Series Drumsticks

Vater has collaborated with several of their top endorsers to create a series of sticks intended to fill a specific gap in the drumstick market. The Xtreme Design series is targeted at drummers who've been asking for stick sizes in between Vater's Power 5A/Power 5B models and their Rock model. According to Vater, the results are well balanced, comfortably weighted, and responsive models. All three models are 16½" in length and are available with rounded barrel-style wood or nylon tips. The XD-5A has a diameter of .580"; the XD-5B's diameter is .610", and the XD-Rock's diameter is .630". Wood-tip versions are priced at $11.85; nylon-tip models sell for $12.30.

(781) 767-1877, www.vater.com.

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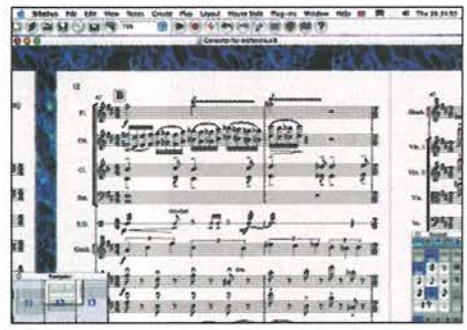

According to Sibelius Software, their 3.0 software represents a dramatic advance for the writing of music. It contains more than 170 new features and over 30 additional plug-ins. One of the most innovative enhancements is the inclusion of the Kontakt Player Silver, a joint effort between Sibelius Software and software synthesis company Native Instruments. The Kontakt Player Silver enables users to play back music using high-quality instrumental samples, burn compositions to CD, and create audio files for posting on the Internet. It contains a useful selection of brass, woodwind, strings, percussion, voices, and a Bösendorfer piano. Kontakt Player Gold, which may be purchased separately, has 64 instrumental and 100 percussion sounds, including a wide range of orchestral and band instruments.

New features across the spectrum will appeal to all types of musicians, from professional composers to students. In addition to many of the new features directed toward arrangers, composers, and music copyists, an array of functions are geared toward the educational market.

The look and feel of Sibelius 3 has been further improved with a fresh interface and a new smoothness setting for extra display clarity and enhanced zooming and navigation. Shadow Notes makes input of notes with a mouse easy and hassle-free, as it displays exactly where a note will appear before it is input. With Sibelius 3.0, the user can also create audio CDs and MP3s from a score using the powerful Save-As-Audio Track feature.

(925) 280-0600, www.sibelius.com.

Orchestral Originals

Evans Strata Concert Drumheads

Evans' new Strata series offers a diverse array of concert snare, tom, bass, and timpani heads. They're said to have a traditional sound and appearance, but with "the manufacturing consistency that percussionists have come to expect from Evans."

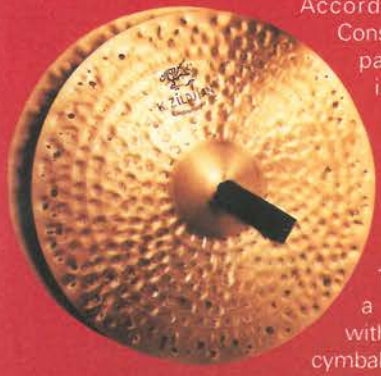
Strata timpani heads feature a smooth, calf-colored coating designed to prevent timpani mallet wear and enhance the sound of the head. Their "warm tone, clarity, pitch, and articulation" is said to blend naturally with any ensemble. The heads are pre-tensioned with a black powder-coated insert ring for tuning consistency and additional hoop support.

Strata concert snare heads come in 7-mil or 10-mil thicknesses, and are said to yield "a dark timbre with a warm, natural sustain, and midrange overtones." Strata staccato snare heads come with a 2-mil overtone control ring for increased articulation in either thickness.

The 10-mil Strata concert tom heads have a darker fundamental, with a warm and round tone. Strata concert bass heads are available in 28", 30", 32", 36", and 40" sizes with or without a Central Power Dot, which lengthens sustain and deepens the fundamentals.

(800) 323-2746, www.evansdrumheads.com.

Zildjian K Constantinople Vintage Orchestral And Mastersound Anti-Lock Marching And Band Cymbal Pairs



According to Zildjian, their 18" K Constantinople Vintage Orchestral cymbal pairs re-create sounds found only in instruments over a century old. The cymbal pairs are said to possess "a rich, powerful, and dark expression of a cymbal sound." The Zildjian Sound Lab worked with the Vienna Philharmonic to re-create the sound of their 120-year-old pair of K Zildjians. The new cymbal pairs are said to have a versatile blend of mid-range, along with the ability to project like a pair of 20" cymbals. They're priced at $950 per pair.

Zildjian's new Mastersound Anti-Lock cymbal pairs were developed along with noted educator/performer Jonathan Haas. They feature the crimped hammering on the outer edge that is found on Zildjian's Mastersound hi-hats. This promotes easy playability by helping to eliminate the problem of air lock. Mastersound Anti-Lock cymbal pairs are available in Zildjian's A Concert Stage (16"—$474; 18"—$560) and ZXT Band (16"—$302; 18"—$344) series.

(781) 871-2200, www.zildjian.com.

It's In The Bag

Gator Cymbal, Pedal, And Percussion Bags

Gator Cases offers two new bags specifically designed for drummers. Both bags feature synthetic fur lining and 30-mm foam to provide protection to their contents during transportation and storage.

The GP-12 Deluxe Cymbal Slinger bag comfortably fits eight cymbals up to 22" in diameter and features individual soft protectors for each cymbal. Carrying is made easy using either the "slinger" one-shoulder backpack design or with the heavy-duty web carry handles. Meanwhile, the GP-66 Double Pedal bag is a fit-all bag for double pedals. It measures 10" x 18".

Also new is the GP-40 Percussion Accessory bag, designed to accommodate a wide variety of smaller drum accessories. It's made of rugged 600-denier nylon. The interior features an adjustable divider for separate compartments, while the exterior has additional storage pockets.

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Pearl's innovative Marc Quiñones Signature Timbale set consists of 14" and 15" drums fitted with Remo Clear Ambassador heads. The polished steel shells have two inverse beads designed to add strength and to produce a cutting "cascara" sound (side of the shell) not hindered by outward-facing beads. To further enlarge the "cascara" striking area, the drums feature a five-lug design that's proportioned to leave maximum shell space and less lug interference. Tuning and head changes are made easier and faster via a top-tuning-lug system and an included socket wrench, which alleviate the problem of nuts and washers falling on the floor during head changes.

The cowbell post features a sympathetic sound-dampening sleeve to prevent cowbells and blocks from ringing through the stand. The whole unit can be mounted in seconds using a one-wing-nut design. A double-braced tilting stand and Pearl's PBL-20 Clave Block is included at no extra charge. List price is $599.

On the marching side, Pearl's Championship marching-drum series is now available in a Brushed Silver finish.

(615) 833-4477, www.pearldrum.com.

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Spaun Z Series Drumkits

Spaun's new Z Series kits feature 100% maple shells, solid lugs, and double 45° bearing edges. Evans heads, including the EMAD bass drum head, are standard on each kit.

Five-piece packages with hardware include 8x10, 9x12, and 12x14 suspended toms, a 5x14 snare drum, and a choice of 18x22 or 18x20 bass drums with a double tom mount. The package of double-braced hardware includes two hideaway cymbal booms, one hi-hat stand, one snare stand, and one single bass drum pedal. The kits are available in Black Serpentine finish (shown here) with offset lugs, or Burgundy Gloss finish with standard lug placement, at a list price of $2,599.

(909) 971-7761, www.spaundrums.com.

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Superbeaters Rubber Bass Drum Beaters

According to the manufacturer, Superbeaters provide "better action and less fatigue than any other beater on the market." The beaters, which feature ultra-dense rubber balls as the beater head, are designed to offer improved rebound and shock reduction while creating a dense, powerful bass-drum sound. Four different sizes are available to provide drummers with a choice of pedal action and acoustic character.

(720) 276-3948, www.superbeaters.com.

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Latin Percussion's new LP Aspire Santana Series congas and bongos feature exclusive Santana-inspired graphics and Gold Tone hardware. Each conga stands 28" high and comes with EZ Curve rims. Also standard are $^{9}/_{32}$"-diameter tuning rods, LP Aspire reinforced side plates, and specially selected rawhide heads. Shells are of fiberglass.

Congas are available in a 10" quinto/11" conga set, with stand ($599), and also in a single 12" tumba size ($270). Bongos ($6^{3}/_{4}$" and 8" diameters) are priced at $139.

(973) 478-6903, www.lpmusic.com.

Set Your Sound Apart

Auralex HoverDeck

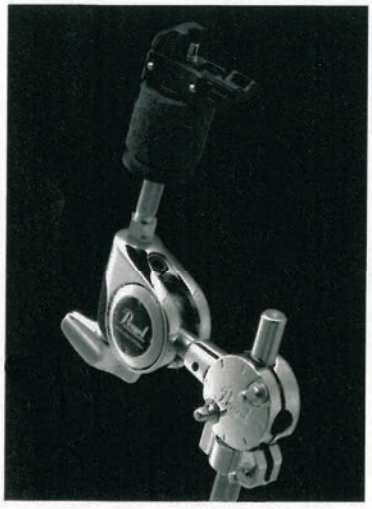
According to Auralex Acoustics, stages and traditional drum risers sympathetically resonate with drums and onstage speaker cabinets. These resonances feed back to the drums, and are then picked up by the drum mic's. Aurelex's new HoverDeck is engineered to reduce coloration from floor resonance by "decoupling" the kit from the floor, resulting in a tighter, purer sound for studio and live applications. Component panels fit together to create the deck for performance, then break down for easy pack-up and transport. Two sizes are available: The HD-64 Gig ($399) and the HD-88 Concert ($999).

(800) 95-WEDGE, www.auralex.com.

Boom Or Bust

Pearl BC-2000 And BC-1000 Boom Stands

Pearl claims that their BC-2000 is *the* state-of-the-art multi-angle boom stand. It has a removable counterweight, a Gyro-Lock tilter with form-fit stop lock, and a knurled boom arm—all with rattle-free performance thanks to a die-cast pipe joint fitting with a nylon bushing that prevents metal-to-metal contact. Parallel double-braced legs prevent wobble, while oversized rubber feet keep everything firmly planted. List price is $229.



Pearl's B-1000 boom stand features a newly designed Uni-Lock tilter with a built-in cowbell post, topped off with a reversible cymbal cup that can be used to control the cymbal's range of motion. A quick-release nut makes cymbal changes super fast, while a new boom tilter provides dependable angles. A die-cast pipe joint utilizing a nylon bushing prevents unwanted noise from metal-to-metal contact within the tube. Double-braced legs and vibration-absorbing rubber feet are also included, at a list price of $139.

(615) 833-4477, www.pearldrum.com.

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Lowering The Boom...Or At Least Its Weight

Carbonlite Carbon-Fiber Cymbal Boom Arms

Carbonlite offers carbon-fiber cymbal boom arms for use with their line of lightweight carbon-fiber rack systems, as well as with conventional rack systems. The arms are more than 80% lighter than steel boom arms due to the use of a solid carbon-fiber boom arm rod. According to the manufacturer, the vibration-damping effect of the carbon-fiber boom arm also serves to isolate cymbals for reduced vibration transfer and improved sustain. The boom arms can be used with conventional cymbal stands using standard multi-clamps, and can replace existing ½"-diameter steel boom arms from other manufacturers.

Carbonlite boom arms are available in short and long versions, with or without a steel base. The steel base has a "hideaway" design with the boom arm sliding into the base for transport or for use as a straight stand. The base has separate adjustment clamps for tilting and boom extension. Prices range from $42 to $62, depending upon the model. Carbonlite also produces carbon-fiber rack systems and replacement rack tubing in several standard configurations.

(727) 742-2263, www.carbonlite.com.

All That Glitters...

DW Drum Hardware Color Options And HardCore Bass Drum Beater

Drum Workshop Collector's Series drums are now available with hardware finished in gold or satin chrome. In response to requests for gold hardware by such high-profile artists as Mick Fleetwood and Travis Barker, DW has discontinued its brass hardware option and upgraded to a 24-karat-gold plating process. According to DW, "Gold plating is more expensive, but the demand for it has increased. Since it has become so popular and is much more durable, we decided to make the switch."

Satin chrome drum hardware, which was previously only available on the limited-edition Timeless Timber, 25th Anniversary, and Billy Ward Drummer's Choice snares, will now be a fourth color choice when designing a custom Collector's Series drumset. Collector's Series drum hardware includes lugs, counterhoops, tom suspension mounts, throw-offs, butt plates, bass drum mounts, and memory locks. Lug rods are available in standard chrome and gold only. Other available drum hardware choices are chrome and black chrome.

DW has also augmented their venerable SM101 two-sided bass drum beater with a new design. Developed with input from Bob Gatzen (the latest addition to the DW R&D team), the beater's construction features a hard plastic core imbedded in soft rubber foam. According to the manufacturer, the beater acts much like a pure felt beater when played softly. But when struck hard, it has the attack of a hard plastic or wood beater ball. The beater's backplate is solid aluminum, with a positive connection to the hard core. The velocity-sensitive action can be adjusted to every player's needs and to allow a wide range of bass drum sounds. The beater comes complete with an adjustable counterweight, at a list price of $29.

(805) 485-6999, www.dwdrums.com.

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KELLER PRODUCTS now offers Same Species snare shells, which are composed of one-toned wood from the front of the shells to the back, and enhanced with the company's VSS (Vibrating Sound Source) feature. According to Keller, "These shells enable manufacturers and players to experience fresh new sounds at the cores of their drums."

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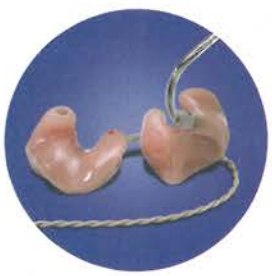
(603) 627-7887, www.kelleratthecore.com.

2004 marks the twentieth anniversary of Southern California–based **SUNLITE INDUSTRIAL CORP**. As part of their celebration, Sunlite will offer a limited-production 20th Anniversary Studio five-piece drumset, as well as an all-new five-piece student-level set that will replace the venerable SP-509DP Select. The commemorative editions will sport features and colors that are not normally available, in order to set them apart from the standard production versions.
(626) 448-8018, www.sunlitedrum.com.

Savannah, Georgia is home to **GRETSCH** drums. To commemorate this connection, Gretsch offers a full-size, aluminum automotive license plate featuring the classic Gretsch Drum logo and the "Georgia On My Mind" slogan. Also new is a baseball cap featuring the classic Gretsch "Round Badge" logo embroidered on the front. These items and more are available from www.Gretschgear.com, the official home for Gretsch merchandise and collectibles. Visit the site or call **(800) 436-9690.**



WESTONE states that their ES3 is the world's first true three-way in-ear monitor. While triple-driver in-ear designs have been available for some time, such designs merely utilize an additional bass driver to increase low-end response. The ES3 is designed with low-, mid-, and high-frequency drivers and a crossover, providing additional clarity, punch, and detail. It lists for $800. Ear impressions made by a hearing healthcare professional are required. A searchable list of these professionals can be found on the Westone Music Products Web site.
(800) 525-5071, www.westone.com/music.

UNIVERSAL PERCUSSION is offering affordable drumstick packs for "working drummers' practice sessions" or for "entry-level drummers on a budget." Called China Brick sticks, the packs offer maple and oak sticks in twenty-four different models, in "bricks" of twelve pairs per model.
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New from **CARL FISCHER** is an instructional book on brush playing from Clayton Cameron. Called *Brushworks, The New Language For Playing Brushes*, the book is said to give the reader "an encyclopedic survey of brushstrokes in a step-by-step process that is clear and precise." An included CD features sounds and patterns performed by Clayton.

Carl Fischer is also offering two of its most successful drum videos in DVD format. They are Dave Weckl's *How To Develop Technique* and *How To Practice* (each $29.95), from Dave's *Evolution* series.
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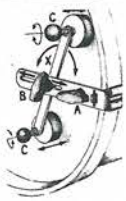

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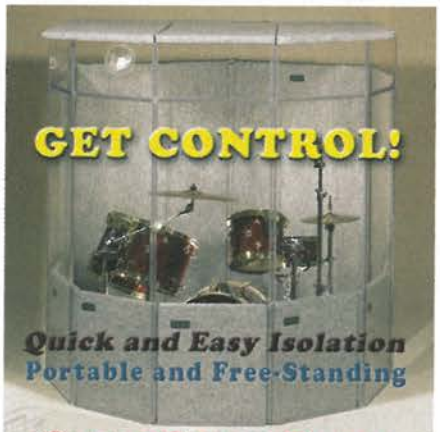

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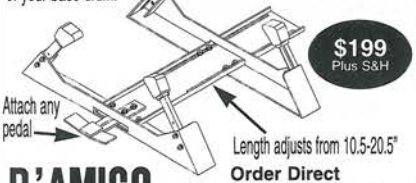

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Now *here's* a band to get excited about. Incorporating influences as diverse as '80s synth-pop like OMD and New Order and '90s forward thinkers like Shudder To Think and Tortoise, +/- makes smart, commanding rock music that looks forward yet never loses sight of the past. Super-tasteful arrangement and sound choices, killer chops, clear and strong vocals, sticky melodies, cool programming, unusual but appropriate rhythms...the areas this band excels in seem endless. Oh yeah, and they've got a mammoth drummer in **CHRIS DEANER**, who no doubt never stops thinking outside the box. Plus he's got a great ear for sounds, isn't afraid to play with gusto, tears it up in four, seven, and ten, and even finds ways to make modern rock accommodate soulful variations in stick placement. Give us more, soon!

Adam Budofsky

Living Colour

Collideøscope (Sanctuary)

On Living Colour's first album in a decade, **WILL CALHOUN** plays...*time?* Yes, the man who brought over-the-top drumming to the pop charts in the late '80s has stripped away his gigantic fills to focus on groove. It's hard to argue with the punchy beat to "Flying" or the creative hi-hats on "Nightmare City," but old fans might wish for more of Calhoun's signature outbursts. Otherwise, the band continues exploring current events—there've been plenty to write about—and has updated its sound with jungle rhythms. **Corey Glover** remains one of rock's gutsiest singers, and **Vernon Reid** finds his inner Hendrix on "Holy Roller."

Michael Parillo

Clyde Stubblefield

The Original (Liquid)

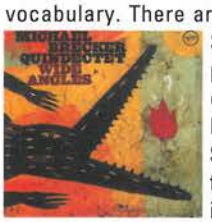
The groove that made James Brown famous returns on **CLYDE STUBBLEFIELD**'s debut. If ever a groove contained magic, it's Stubblefield's—from the jaunty New Orleans funk of "The Difference" and the shuffle of "The Walking Band" to the popping snare punches of "Hippest March." Stubblefield's tipping pocket and righteous groove remain unchanged by time, each performance here a lesson in rhythmic assurance. He even smokes fusion-funk on "Okay," a tongue-tying groove that nearly suspends time. If you can get past the questionable vocals, tooting saxophone, and production gimmicks, you'll find Clyde's drumming as potent as ever.

Ken Micallef

Michael Brecker Quindectet

Wide Angles (Verve)

Saxophonist Michael Brecker's latest album contains interesting writing and a great mix of grooves and feels. Throughout, up and coming drummer **ANTONIO SANCHEZ** propels the music with a translucent yet driving force, adding color and commentary along the way. Sanchez deftly navigates the band arrangements here, setting up and prodding with a noteworthy vocabulary. There are a lot of moods on this album, and Sanchez expertly helps to give each piece its personality, whether melancholy, funky, swinging, or drawing on Latin traditions. Percussionist **DANIEL SADOWNICK** is an equally important force here. Overall, a creative and inspiring release.



Martin Patmos

Probot (Southern Lord)

A one-man band with vocals by Motörhead's **Lemmy** and Sepultura's **Max Cavalera**, Probot is the metal muscle and songwriting expertise of **DAVE GROHL** times three. Playing all the drums, guitar, and bass, Grohl revisits the music of his youth with characteristic professionalism and intensity. While his drumming on Queens Of The Stone Age's *Songs For The Deaf* was about deep grooves and skyrocketing fills, Probot is more lean, edgy, and terse, like a night in the desert compared to a morning in a rat-hole. Grohl is explosive throughout, drumming with a psychopathic drive that is gleeful and gut-splitting.

Ken Micallef

EXTREME BEATS

by Jeff Perlah

Slayer Soundtrack To The Apocalypse box set (American Recordings/UME)

Slayer revolutionized thrash/speed metal with their ultra-tight, maniacal arrangements and disturbing lyrics. "In the beginning, I was infusing punk with straight-forward hard rock and metal," says drummer **DAVE LOMBARDO**, who held the sticks through 1990's *Seasons In The Abyss*, and recently re-joined the group. "I was inspired by John Bonham, Mitch Mitchell, Keith Moon, Ginger Baker, and other pioneers of the solo."

This box set, spanning the group's entire career in three CDs and a DVD (a lavish deluxe edition packs an extra CD featuring a complete 2002 gig), reveals some of the finest metal drumming to date. Lombardo's greatest moments came on the extreme-metal milestone *Reign In Blood* and its follow-up, *South Of Heaven*. **PAUL BOSTAPH** played through 2001's underrated *God Hates Us All* and certainly sustained Slayer's titanic drum sound. Cuts from every album and tons of non-album material are presented here. The DVD offers live footage from the early '80s and beyond.

While taking a break from the box, cue up Slayer's recent concert DVD *War At The Warfield* (American Recordings). And in case you're wondering, Lombardo and guitarist **Kerry King** have already recorded a demo of new material, which was distributed amongst the quartet. "We're soaking it in," Lombardo reveals. And *we're* looking forward to hearing what transpires.

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Bisquera Brothers (Bisquera Brothers)

At no time on this family affair does **CURT BISQUERA**'s drumming get in the way—rather, it *is* the way. This is groovesmanship of the highest order, caressing the time. The room positively opens up on "Lester's Intro," when the first-call LA drummer goes to the hesitating beat on ride cymbal, then breaks it down with the flam rimshots. ("Flamshots"?) "Leon's Mess" provides Bisquera with the canvas he needs to lay down one of the year's best inverted funk beats. "Let The James Begin" shows off CB's concepts of sounds and dynamics, as he pops it with snares off, again with a killer cross-stick. Through it all, **RICH MANGICARO**'s percussion sweetens the mix. Forgive them for the sappy "Close To You." Folks, this is syncopation class. (www.bisquerabrothers.com)

Robin Tolleson

Victor DeLorenzo

Dictionary By/Of Marcel Duchamp (bFt)

You'd be forgiven for assuming an album inspired by a famous avant-garde visual artist would be a difficult, abstract affair. And though this set by Violent Femmes drummer **VICTOR DELORENZO** is certainly adventurous, it's anything but academic. Color and rhythm are the constants throughout these mostly instrumental cuts, and DeLorenzo creates a unique sonic environment every time, with warm drum tones, eerie keyboard sounds, and intriguing vocal snippets. Drummers who've played with the idea of committing their own personal vision to tape are advised to check this one out; your options are likely greater than you think. (www.victordelorenzo.com)

Joshua Parker

Jack Bruce

More Jack Than God (Sanctuary)

Bruce has played with many drumming legends, and on *More Jack Than God* he makes an interesting choice with trapsters **ROBBY AMEEN** and **HORACIO "EL NEGRO" HERNANDEZ**, along with conga player **RICHIE FLORES**. At times the section, who Bruce earlier worked with in Kip Hanrahan's band, sound huge. "Bizniz" shows off their distinct parts on a slow 3/4. "Ricin" starts out beautifully de-constructed, and "The Night That Used To Be Mine" is a slow 6/8 that flows nicely under Bruce's melodramatic vocal. No complaint with the playing from the percussion team, though the music does seem strained to accommodate this much hitting.

Robin Tolleson

Trans Am

Liberation (Thrill Jockey)

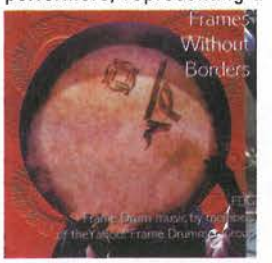
Amid the futuristic new wave of Washington, DC's Trans Am, drummer **SEBASTIAN THOMSON** drives squirming funk and punk rock beats, programmed robo-grooves, and streamlined Tony Thompson imitations. Sebastian's precise, powerful drumming is as much a part of Trans Am's production style as it is the music's rhythmic impetus, each song featuring different tuning, groove attitude, and sonic approach. In "Music For Dogs" Thomson morphs from Bonham-ish bombast to static-y groove cut-ups, while his solo in "Divine Invasion" recalls the intensity of "Radar Love" and "Won't Get Fooled Again."

Ken Micallef

HANDS ON

Yahoo! Frame Drummer Group, Heritage O.P., The Ethos Percussion Group, Celia Malheiros

Members of the Yahoo! Frame Drummer Group submitted thirty-five tracks for *Frames Without Borders*, and a remarkable bit of hand drumming this is. **LAYNE REDMOND**, **N. SCOTT ROBINSON**, **GANESH ANANDAN**, and **JUDY PIAZZA** are among the twenty-six performers, representing a dozen different countries. A frame drum is one whose head diameter is much greater than the depth of its frame. That definition comprises many different instruments, and indeed quite a number of those are represented here—tar, bodhran, kanjira, bendir, pandeiro, riq, daf, and of course the tambourine. (www.rhythmweb.com/fdg)



New York City's Heritage O.P. builds solid rhythmic undercurrents with congas and assorted hand percussion, and then adds tuned parts on bells, mbira, marimba, and vocals as either a melody or a "cheerleader" part to get people in the groove. Bandmembers **RON MCBEE**, **KEVIN NATHANIEL**, **HASAN BAKR**, and **VICTOR Y. SEE YUEN** have a serious pop sense too. This is a joyous conglomeration of percussion power, not as a result of the soloing of any one player, but from the strength of the whole band. (www.heritageop.com)

Four more talented percussionists—**MICHAEL SGOUROS**, **ERIC PHINNEY**, **TREY FILES**, and **YOUSIF SHERONICK**—make up The Ethos Percussion Group. *Sol Tunnels* brings influences from Northern Africa, Southern India, Brazil, and a used car lot in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. This is enjoyable, non-stuffy, ethnic chamber percussion. (www.ethospercussiongroup.org)

Celia Malheiros' *Sempre Crescendo* is sensual Brazilian music that moves the percussion from a supportive role right up to the front as the heartbeat. The San Francisco-based Malheiros displays her considerable composing and instrumental talents alongside some of Rio's best musicians, including drummer **WILSON DAS NEVES**, percussionists **CELSINHO SILVA** and **MARCOS SUZANO**, and the revered keyboardist **Hermeto Pascoal**. (www.celiamalheiros.com)

Robin Tolleson

Dream Theater

Train Of Thought (Elektra)

Transatlantic

Live In Europe (MetalBlade)

During the past year, **MIKE PORTNOY** has appeared on albums from Neal Morse, John Arch, Jim Matheos' OSI, Dream Theater, and Transatlantic. On them he's continued to enhance his reputation, with a style that becomes progressively distinctive. Dream Theater's new album is a darker, heavier affair for them that contains some wonderful melodies and ultimately ranks among their best. With songs averaging eleven minutes, there is plenty to navigate through, and Portnoy does so powerfully. More importantly, he avoids over-playing and is consistently musical while utilizing his formidable chops—not an easy balance considering the group's "more is more" aesthetic. Meanwhile, Transatlantic's '70s progressive vibe allows Portnoy to explore a different set of feels and phrasing from DT. Everyone seems to enjoy the engaging material, resulting in another excellent recording.

Martin Patmos

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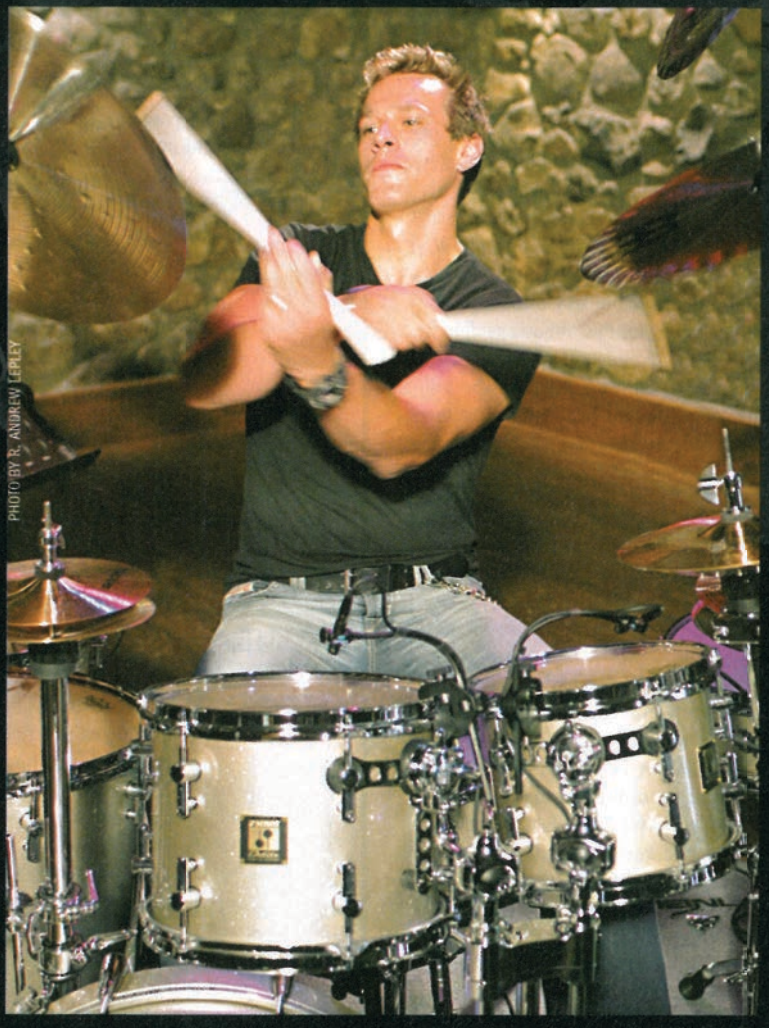

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Koby Israelite

Dance Of The Idiots (Tzadik)

Dance Of The Idiots takes klezmer and other traditional Jewish music and mashes them together with metal, funk, electronica, and beyond. Imagine a cantor's intro followed by a drum 'n' bass break that crashes suddenly into a speed-metal passage, and you get the idea. (Just don't forget to toss in a few quiet bars of chamber music somewhere.) It's all drummer/multi-instrumentalist **KOBY ISRAELITE**'s twisted vision, and his commitment to his far-out hybrid makes it work. Israelite hits hard when seated at the kit—at one point he blazes a thundering tom solo over spare accordion accompaniment—but also showcases sensitive and authentic hand drumming. By blending his beloved ethnic music with more modern forms, he honors tradition while proving it's sturdy enough to survive transformation and cross-pollination. **Michael Parillo**

Massimo Aiello

Tribute To Beethoven:
Drum In The Symphony No. 9 (Azzurra Music)

Who among us hasn't heard a piece of classical music, and as if from a scene in *Wayne's World*, lifted our arms high and air-drummed a monster fill? Well, Massimo Aiello had the courage to do what the rest of us have only dreamed of, and he did the job right. Aiello thoroughly but unobtrusively arranged a drumset part for this famous symphony, showing a fine command of dynamics while pounding drums like kettles and cymbals like lightning rods. Anyone who poo-poos this CD out of hand isn't a "true" musician, for included in that term must certainly be a sense of humor. Rock on! (www.azzurramusic.it) **Robin Tolleson**

DVDs

The Beatles

The Ed Sullivan Shows (Sofa Entertainment)
level: all, $29.95

The Beatles are coming! The Beatles are coming! This February 9 marked the forty-year anniversary of The Beatles' historic American debut on the *Ed Sullivan* TV show, which was watched by a world record–breaking audience of 73 million viewers. Up till then we'd heard the group on the radio and seen their photos in the papers, but this was our first real introduction to John, Paul, George (under the influence of the flu), and **RINGO**—the man who would go on to inspire a generation of drummers. *The Ed Sullivan Show Presents The Beatles* is a two-DVD set that includes four complete Sullivan shows (commercials included) with all twenty performances by The Beatles. The films have been digitally restored, and most comprise rare footage unseen since the original broadcasts. It's pure Beatles, captured in all their sweet innocence. That doesn't mean the band didn't rage, especially Ringo. Examples: his dynamic driving beat on "Please Please Me," famous right-hand swing beat on "Help," "All My Loving," and "I'm Down," double-hand crashes on "I Saw Her Standing There," and, as he would say, "silly-little backwards fills" in "I Want To Hold Your Hand." Those of us who were there will be flooded with memories; those who weren't are in for a real treat. If you never understood all the fuss about Ringo, this verifies it all. **Billy Amendola**

Desert Sessions 9 & 10 (Ipecac)

With a star-studded cast including **PJ Harvey** and **Twiggy Ramirez**, *Desert Sessions* is the ongoing psychedelic saga of Queens Of The Stone Age's **Josh Homme**. Like a Beatles–meets–Mars Volta mind-freak, the songs are highly melodic and rhythmically hyperbolic, drummers **JOEY CASTILLO** (Danzig) and **JOSH FREESE** (Vandals, A Perfect Circle) playing with crunching power and beauteous finesse as needed. Castillo and Freese creatively bash and bend throughout, surpassing cookie cutter nu-metal or alt-rock grooves. Only slapdash, tinny production mars the otherwise engrossing performances. **Ken Micallef**

BOOKS

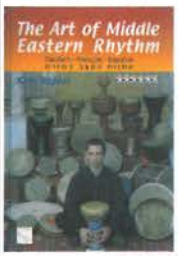
Brazilian Rhythms For Drum Set And Percussion

by Alberto Netto (Berklee Press)
level: all, $29.95 (with CD)

Alberto Netto has created a wonderful sourcebook for understanding the history of Brazilian drumming. Each rhythm is explained in detail as it relates to a specific dance and/or religious celebration. Percussion instruments are introduced one by one and built into amazing ensembles. The drumset is also incorporated as it combines many sounds all at once. More than three hundred years of African slavery in Brazil (with origins including Sudan, Angola, Congo, and Mozambique) has resulted in an amazing blending of the cultures. Song form, syncopation, and the instruments themselves reflect this influence. The extensive CD tracks show how much variety exists in the world of Brazilian percussion. Netto's fluid drumset playing and clearly stated text results in a gem of a book. **David Licht**

The Art Of Middle Eastern Rhythm

by Kobi Hagoel (Or-Tav Music Publications)
level: all, $72 (with 6 CDs)



Peace in the Middle East through hand drumming? One could only hope! Eleven years in the making, this mini-encyclopedia of Middle Eastern and Mediterranean drumming by Kobi Hagoel is a wealth of knowledge. The hardcover book, translated into English, German, French, Spanish, and Hebrew, contains nearly five hundred transcribed rhythms, which are vocalized first and then played on two different-sounding hand drums. (One of my favorites is "Dishka" from Nubia, which Hagoel calls "the grandfather of reggae.") One can even learn to count in Hebrew along the way. The sixty-seven photos walk you through the "technique" of how to physically play the various drums, and the detailed history shows how all the rhythms are related. This tour book travels from Egypt to Greece, from Israel to Azerbaijan, from Iraq to Albania, from Morocco to Uzbekistan, and most all of the countries and regions in between. Amazing! ([210] 226-8167, info@southernmusic.com) **David Licht**

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Percussive Arts Society International Convention

Nearly six thousand percussionists converged on Louisville, Kentucky this past November 19–22 for four days of clinics, concerts, and master classes. In addition to all the educational activities and artist performances, the event featured 133 exhibitors displaying every imaginable percussion product. So convention attendees could spend hours checking out the latest gear, while rubbing shoulders with some very famous drummers.

Eight full hours were devoted to drumset on Thursday. Swedish drummer **Peter Ostlund** kicked things off with a 9:00 A.M. clinic, followed by **David Garibaldi** (Tower Of Power), **Steve Smith** (Vital Information), and **Omar Hakim** (Madonna). Master classes were given by author and teacher **Jim Chapin** (who covered hand development in a session devoted to technique), **Tony Martiucci** (member of the Russian-American jazz group Partners In Time), and Indonesian jazz musician **Gilang Ramadhan**.

Cindy Blackman

Jimmy Chamberlin

Drummer **Ralph Peterson** was joined by vibist **Bryan Carrott** and a bass player for a drumset clinic/performance. "The musical dialog comes from listening not only *to* the instrument, but *past* the instrument," Peterson stated.

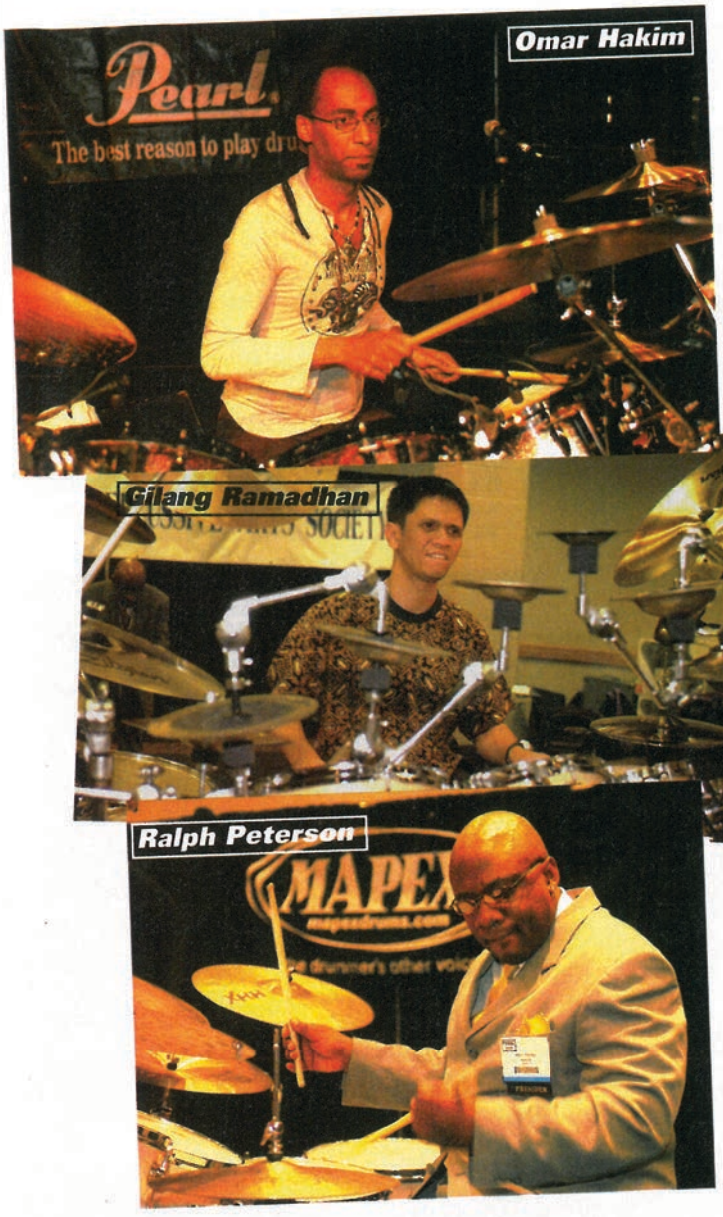
Friday saw another eight hours devoted to the drumkit. **Bruce Klauber** gave a presentation on "The History Of Jazz Drumming On Film." Master classes featured **Joe Morello** (Dave Brubeck) and **Steve Davis** (Lynne Arriale). **Ed Shaughnessy** (Doc Severinsen) performed with the University of Louisville Jazz Ensemble. And clinics were offered by **Mike Wengren** (Disturbed), **Troy Luccketta** (Tesla), **Cindy Blackman** (Lenny Kravitz), and **Tommy Igoe** (*The Lion King*).

Although she had recently injured her left hand in a bicycling incident, Cindy Blackman played better with one hand than most drummers do with two. "I just tried to do with three limbs what I normally do with four," she joked with the crowd. She also advised drummers who get an injury to seek out the best help they can find.

Following an earlier children's concert with the percussionists from *The Lion King* (who were on tour in Louisville), Tommy Igoe wowed the audience with an extended solo. He emphasized the simple things in playing, like "getting your foundation together." He also attributed many groove problems to faulty technique.

Carl Allen

Saturday's drumset performer/clinicians included **Pete Retzlaff** (Drummers Collective), **Carl Allen** (Freddie Hubbard), **Gordy Knudtson** (Musictech College), and **Peter Erskine** (who also played with vibist **Mike Mainieri** on the evening concert). A drumset FUNdamental session was presented by **Jim Royle** and **Terry O'Mahoney**, while Cheap Trick's **Bun E. Carlos** taught a "history of rock 'n' roll" lesson by borrowing examples from other great drummers. **Jimmy Chamberlin** (Smashing Pumpkins/Zwan) confessed to "learning a lot about drumming during the other clinics here" while also sharing his



insight into the rock world.

Drumsets could also be found as part of several percussion-oriented performances during the convention. **Ryoichi Kayatani** drummed with the Nanae Mimura Trio (with **Mimura** on marimba and Tetsuro Toyama on guitar), percussionist **Emil Richards** played with **Steve Houghton**, drummer **Anthony Miranda** accompanied tambourine virtuoso **Alessandra Belloni** during her world percussion clinic, and the entire percussion section of the touring production of *The Lion King* (drummer **Daryll Whitlow**, house percussionist **Stefan Monssen**, mallet percussionist **Michael Faue**, and hand percussionist **Petri Korpela**) accompanied marimbist **Valerie Naranjo** (along with Barry Olsen on keyboards) during Valerie's clinic on "African Styles In The Broadway Pit."

There were also some outstanding evening concerts by two European groups. Swedish percussion ensemble Kroumata performed in celebration of their 25th anniversary. And the Amsterdam Percussion Group presented arrangements of African folk songs that brought down the house.

We offer our apologies to the wonderful drummers and percussionists who could not be mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, but who made Louisville a very special place for a few days in November. Special thanks go to **Rick Mattingly** (a contributing writer for *Modern Drummer*), who did a magnificent job of hosting PASIC in his hometown. More details and pictures can be found at www.pasic.org. And for those who missed the show, start making plans for PASIC 2004 in Nashville, Tennessee, November 10–13.

Story by Lauren Vogel Weiss
Photos by Heinz Kronberger

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Interstate Music DrummerFest 2003

Wisconsin's Interstate Music held their third annual DrummerFest this past November 15. The event, which drew an estimated crowd of a thousand drum fans, took place on the "main stage" in the back of Interstate's superstore.

First up was Steve Vai drummer and Berklee instructor **Mike Mangini**. Mike set the bar high with a jaw-dropping display of chops and his trademark speed. He also played with selected songs from CDs.

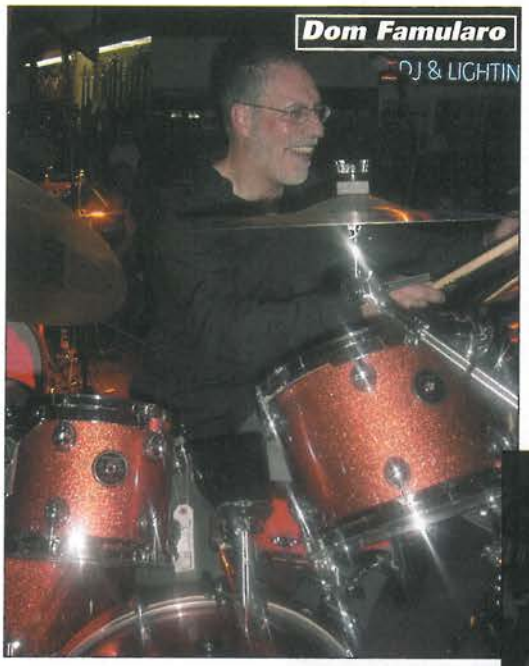
Dom Famularo offered his unique blend of Long Island humor, inspirational sincerity, and passionate approach to drumming. Then he demonstrated his skillful method of "sculpting" a solo as a great work of art.

Groove master **Steve Ferrone** was off the plane at 3:00 and on stage at 4:00. Steve is the epitome of "playing *deep* in the pocket." He also entertained the crowd with a bottomless well of showbiz stories.

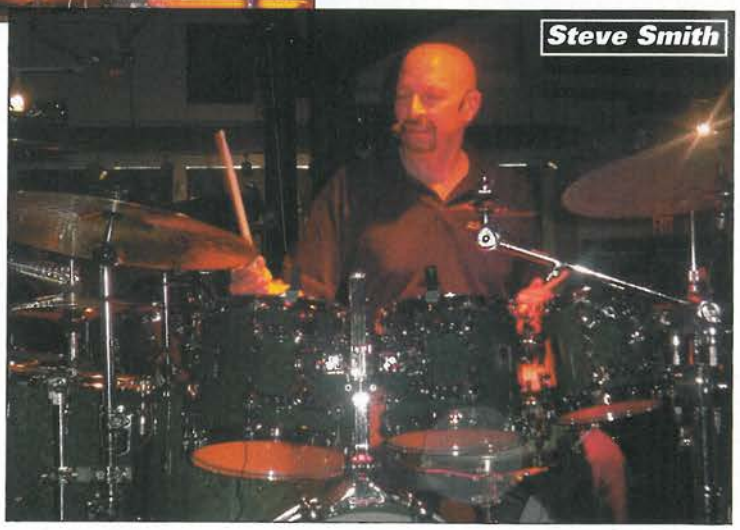
Steve Smith lived up to his reputation as a "drummer's drummer." He displayed amazing versatility as he moved from a single snare with brushes to a lone hi-hat, then to a small kit, and finally to a tour-de-force performance on the full kit.

An All Star Jam topped off the day. Mangini and Smith started things off with a mind-boggling polyrhythmic piece they worked out in the dressing room. They were then joined by Famularo and Ferrone for a ferocious finale that left the audience as exhausted as the performers themselves.

Sponsors for the DrummerFest included Interstate Music, Sabian, Pearl, Zildjian, Premier, Remo, Shure, Sonor, and Vic Firth. Coordination was provided by Interstate's Scott Thayer, Steve Davidson, Esteban Gonzalez, Tom Mlot, John Dykstra, Kacy Ross, and Scott Lange. For further information, contact Scott Thayer at sthayer@interstatemusic.com.



From left: Steve Ferrone, Dom Famularo, Mike Mangini, Steve Smith



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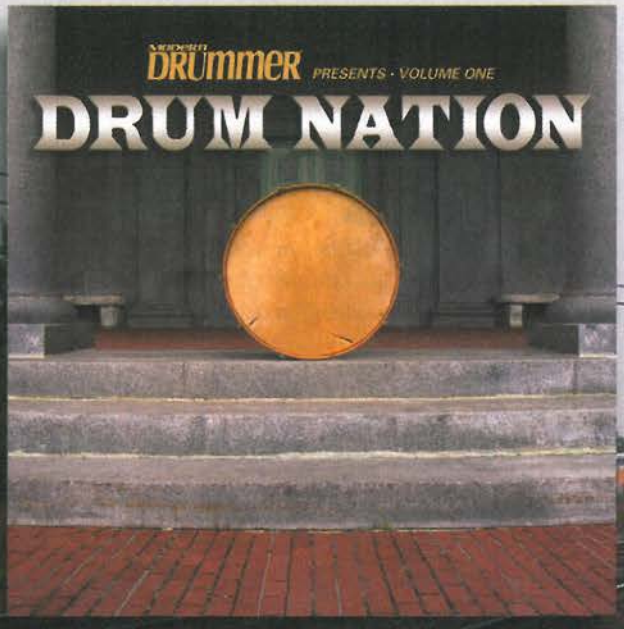

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Premier Replay Tour Finale

From left: Andy Gangadeen, Steve White, Louie Palmer, Chris Bailey, and Jason Stevens

Premier's recent Replay Clinic Tour concluded with a sellout performance at The Lindbury Studio Theatre at the Royal Opera House, in London. The three-hour show left the audience inspired, amazed, and wanting more.

The crowd was "warmed up" by London drum 'n' bass/jungle DJ Jason Stevens. The first drummer up was seventeen-year-old **Louie Palmer**, a talent to watch for the future. Louie impressed everyone with his Latin grooves, jazz styling, and super-fast double bass work.

UK studio star **Chris Bailey** effortlessly brought four tracks to life, making it easy for the crowd to see why he has had gigs with S Club, Eternal, Will Young, and Gareth Gates. Advising the audience about getting work, Chris said, "It's great to be able to play the flash stuff. But it's a solid pocket that will get you the gig." To underscore his point, Chris finished with a track he's been working on with Mary J Blige.

As British heavyweight drummer **Andy Gangadeen** took his place on stage, all eyes were on his hybrid acoustic/electronic kit. After starting with a groove on the acoustic drums using brushes, Andy was joined by Chris Taylor on bass guitar. Andy developed the groove as the two of them worked off each other, using sticks and bringing in more and more pads. As new sounds started to come through, the audience became transfixed.

Studio and touring ace **Steve White** topped the bill. From behind his Premier Series Red Moon Sparkle kit, Steve first demonstrated his skill and control using brushes and sticks. Then he upped the pace, impressing everyone with high-speed fills and double-stroke rolls played with his feet. Steve's advice and encouragement to his fellow drummers was as impressive as his playing. "There are no shortcuts," he said. "Only hard work and determination will better your chance of success. Why practice what you can already play? Push yourself to master the things you can't."

Bruce Crump Benefit

Bruce Crump with Molly Hatchet in the early 1980s

Former Molly Hatchet drummer **Bruce Crump** was diagnosed with cancer early last year. A benefit featuring Bruce's current band, Daddy-Oh, and six other groups held recently in Richmond, Virginia raised over $10,000 toward his expenses. A live CD of the show is available for sale, the proceeds of which will be added to Bruce's aid fund. Information is available at www.daddy-oh.com/bruce.htm. Contributions can also be made to Mount Pisgah United Methodist Church (write "Bruce Crump Medical Fund" in the memo), 1100 Mt. Pisgah Drive, Midlothian, VA 23113.

LP "What's On Your Kit" Contest

You can win a percussive windfall in Latin Percussion's "What's On Your Kit" contest. Log on to www.lpmusic.com/yourkit.html. Print and complete the entry form and send it, along with a photo of you and your kit, to What's On Your Kit Contest, Latin Percussion, 160 Belmont Avenue, Garfield, NJ 07026. The contest runs until December 31, 2004, with monthly and quarterly prize winners beginning January 31. Monthly prizes will consist of LP Softshakes and an exclusive Web page on www.lpmusic.com. Quarterly prizes will be LP Mini Timbales and the Web page.

A grand prize winner will be selected on or before January 31, 2005. That winner will receive a complete LP Drumset Accessory Kit, with a value of $1,320. It will include a Gajate Bracket (for pedal-driven bells or blocks), Jam and Blast Blocks, Cyclops Tambourines and Shakers, Black Beauty cowbells, and more. The winner will also receive the exclusive Web page, and will appear with his or her kit in an LP ad in *Modern Drummer*.

THE MODERN DRUMMER FESTIVAL WEEKEND 2003 DVD

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YMC/Dream Theater

Steve Smith
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Matt Wilson
Matt Wilson Quartet

Nathaniel Townsley
Nathaniel Townsley Trio

SUNDAY • Disc Two

Shawn Pelton
House Of Diablo

Airto Moreira

Antonio Sanchez

Nick D'Virgilio

Don't worry if you didn't have a ticket to Modern Drummer's Festival Weekend 2003, because now, with the release of this new 2-disc DVD, your living room sofa has become the best seat in the house! Produced by Hudson Music's award-winning production team, the discs contain almost six hours of performances, interviews, and bonus features in crystal-clear digital audio and video, with easy-to-navigate menus and chapter selection. Featured are special appearances by eight of today's most popular drum artists, as well as Mike Orris, Jr. and Louis Santiago, Jr.—the rising stars of the Undiscovered Drummer Contest—plus show-stoppers The Drumbassadors and Hip Pickles. Bonus Features include Mike Portnoy rehearsal footage, stick tricks with Steve Smith and The Drumbassadors, and an exclusive Photo Gallery. Pick up a copy at your favorite drum shop, or go online at www.moderndrummer.com to order your copy today!

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Indy Quickies

A recent **Pearl** promotion offered a one-of-a-kind, 20th Anniversary Export kit autographed by **Joey Jordison**. The lucky winner is **Kristopher Betz**. Kjbetz, as he is known on Pearl's Drummers Forum, is a member of The Air National Guard and drummer for the band Foundry Avenue.

The Eighth Annual Heat Strokes Chicagoland Drum Contest Finals will be held this coming June 19. Last year's finals were covered in the November 2003 issue of *Modern Drummer*. For information on entering the contest, call (847) 404-7806 or go to www.FagianoDrums.com.

Berklee College Of Music has launched a new online program called Berklee Shares. It provides free music lessons and encourages musicians to share and distribute those lessons online. The lessons—made up of MP3s, QuickTime movies, and PDF files derived from curriculum developed at the college—are available at www.berkleeshares.com.

Drum Workshop recently announced the company's largest one-time contribution to its "Buy A Drumset, Plant A Tree" program. A total of 3,062 trees were planted as part of domestic and international reforestation projects. Since 2002, DW has donated a small percentage of the profit from each drumset sold to American Forests, the organization that oversees the program. For more information, call (805) 485-6999 or go to www.dwdrums.com.

As we went to press, we learned of the passing of LA studio great **John Guerin**. John died on Monday, January 5.

John's career spanned more than thirty years. His versatility led to appearances on hundreds of albums by such artists as Joan Baez, Stephen Bishop, Michael Franks, Dave Grusin, George Harrison, Peggy Lee, Joni Mitchell, Thelonious Monk, Harry Nilsson, Linda Ronstadt, and Frank Zappa. He was especially noted for his studio and touring work with Tom Scott & The LA Express. *MD*'s June issue will carry an *In Memoriam* piece in tribute to John.

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Who's Using What

New Tama artists include **Paul Crosby** (Saliva), **Ken Schalk** (Candiria),

Ronald Bruner Jr. (Kenny Garrett), **Chuck Burgi** (Broadway's *Movin' Out*), **Keith Harris** (Black Eyed Peas), **A.J. Pero** (Twisted Sister), **Gary Wiseman** (Bowling For Soup), **Sal Abruscoto** (Life Of Agony), **Jeremy Colson** (Steve Vai), **Pete Wilhoit** (Fiction Plane), and **Shauney Baby** (Hilary Duff).

The recently refurbished studios and performance spaces of London's **Drumtech** drum school are now fully equipped with Pearl drums.

Wally "Gator" Watson is using Samson Technologies drum mic's and their MDR-10 mixing board.

Studio ace **Robin DiMaggio** has signed an exclusive endorsement of Head custom snare drums. He'll be playing this 6½x13 bird's-eye maple drum.

Igor Hobus of Dutch punk veterans The Heideroosjes, and **Silas McQuain** of Spokane-based new-metal band Five Foot Thick, are the latest Meinl cymbal endorsers.

Louis Santiago Jr. is now playing Meinl percussion. Louis debuted at the 2003 Modern Drummer Festival as the winner of *MD*'s Undiscovered Drummer Contest in the over-18 division. Since then he has toured with Maynard Ferguson.

The Cunard Line has taken delivery of a brand-new Premier Series drumkit for use in the main ballroom on its flagship liner, the **Queen Elizabeth 2**.

Vater Percussion's artist roster now includes **Paul Allen** (Kelly Clarkson), **Matt Conley** (Die Trying), **Daniel Erlandsson** (Arch Enemy), **Tony Hammons** (Montgomery Gentry), **Fran Mark** (From Autumn To Ashes), **Derrek Phillips** (Charlie Hunter Trio), **Neil Sanderson** (Three Days Grace), **Jeremy Stacey** (Chris Robinson's New Earth Muc), and **Derek Gledhill** (Smile Empty Soul).

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What's your favorite TV theme music?
The Wild Wild West.

If you could put together an imaginary superband, who would be in it?
Jimi Hendrix, Abe Laboriel Sr., and John Bonham. (I would of course be the drum tech.)

What song makes you say, "I wish I played on that one"?
James Brown's "I Got The Feelin'."

What's your favorite movie?
Quick Change, starring Bill Murray and Geena Davis.

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Atlanta Pro Percussion .....www.atlantapropercussion.com 162
Attack Drumheads .....www.universalpercussion.com 117
Audix .....www.audixusa.com 57
Auralex Acoustics .....www.auralex.com 143
Berklee College of Music .....www.berklee.edu 103
Bosphorus Cymbals .....www.bosphoruscymbals.com 54
Cadeson Drums .....www.cadesonmusic.com 83
Cappella Sticks .....www.cappelladrumsticks.com 144
Carbostick .....www.sonor.com 101
Chimta .....www.beachreader.com 144
CLE Drums .....www.cledrums.com 142
ClearSonic .....www.clearsonic.com 142
Craviotto .....www.craviottodrums.com 58
D'Amico Drums .....www.damicodrums.com 143
Doug Tann .....www.dreamwater.net/dougtann 144
Drum Center of Lexington 144
Drum Nation CD .....www.magnacarta.net 157
Drum Supply House .....www.drummaker.com 144
Drum Workshop (DW) .....www.dwdrums.com 2,125,165
Drum World .....www.drumworld.com 83
Drumfun .....www.drumfun.com 93
Drums, Etc. .....www.drumsetc.com 144
Drums On Sale .....www.drumsonsale.com 143
Evans .....www.evansdrumheads.com 95
Explorers Drums .....www.explorersdrums.com 143
Fat Cat Snares .....www.bigbangdist.com 143
Vic Firth .....www.vicfirth.com 11,13,15
Five-Star Drum Shops .....www.fivestardrumshops.com 119
Full Sail Real World Education .www.fullsail.com 70
Gadsden Music .....www.gadsdenmusic.com 144
Gibraltar .....www.gibraltarhardware.com 123
GMS Drums .....www.gmsdrums.com 97
GND Music .....www.gndmusic.com 142
Gretsch .....www.gretsch.com 37,CV3
Handmade Rhythm .....www.handmaderhythm.com 144
Hardcase .....www.sonor.com 149
Hart Dynamics .....www.hartdynamics.com 102
Hudson Music .....www.hudsonmusic.com 114
Humes & Berg .....www.humes-berg.com 129
Interstate Music .....www.interstatemusic.com 100
Istanbul Agop (Alchemy) .....www.alchemycymbals.com 91
Istanbul Mehmet Cymbals ....www.istanbulmehmet.com 107
Istanbul Agop .....www.istanbulcymbals.com 127
Jamey Aebersold Jazz .....www.jazzbooks.com 142
Jim Payne .....www.funkydrummer.com 144
Joe Morello 144
KoSA .....www.kosamusic.com 142
Larry Crockett .....www.lcrockett.com 144
Latin Percussion (LP) .....www.lpmusic.com 21
Ludwig .....www.ludwig-drums.com CV2
Mac Robert (The Duallist) .....www.theduallist.com 144
Maggio Music .....www.maggiomusic.net 143
Mapex .....www.mapexdrums.com 67
Meinl .....www.meinl.de 9
Memphis Drum Shop .....www.memphisdrumshop.com 144
MetroPad .....www.educationalmusicaccessories.com ..143
Midwest Percussion .....www.midwestpercussion.com 93
Mikedolbear.com .....www.mikedolbear.com 143
Musician's Friend .....www.musiciansfriend.com 133
Musicians Institute .....www.mi.edu 115
Not So Modern Drummer ....www.notsomoderndrummer.com ...142
Pacific Drums & Percussion ..www.pacificdrums.com 23,160
Paiste America .....www.paiste.com 3
Peace Drums .....www.peacedrum.com 55
Pearl .....www.pearldrum.com 76/77,113
Pintech .....www.edrums.com 128
Pork Pie Percussion .....www.porkpiedrums.com 93
Power Music 80
Precision Drums .....www.precisiondrum.com 144
Premier .....www.premier-percussion.com 81
Pro•Mark .....www.promarkdrumsticks.com ..29,53,78,167
ProRiser .....www.proriser.com 143
Protection Racket Drum Cases ...www.bigbangdist.com 141
Puresound Percussion .....www.puresoundpercussion.com 66
Remo .....www.remo.com 69
RockenWraps .....www.rockenwraps.com 153
Rupp's .....www.ruppsdrum.com 144
Sabian .....www.sabian.com 14,79,85
Sam Ash Music .....www.samash.com 145
Sam Barnard's Drum Wrap ....www.sambarnard.net 143
Samson .....www.samsontech.com 137
Set-Fast .....www.set-fast.com 143
Sonor Drums .....www.sonor.com 105
Talent 2000 .....www.talent2k.com/ 144
Tama .....www.tama.com 6/7,40/41
Taye Drums .....www.taye.com 143,144,161
The Collective .....www.thecollectivenyc.com 155
The Drum Pad .....www.thedrumpad.com 144
The Rhythmic Arts Project (TRAP) .www.traponline.com 104
The U.S. Army Field Band ....www.army.mil/fieldband 90
Toca .....www.tocapercussion.com 111
Treeworks .....www.treeworkschimes.com 56
Turkish Cymbals .....www.turkishcymbals.com 68
UFIP America .....www.ufip.com 37
United States Army .....www.goarmy.com 109
Vater Percussion .....www.vater.com 17,144
Vintage Logos .....www.vividheads.com 144
Warner Bros. Publications ....www.warnerbrospublications.com ..147
Wes Crawford's Play-Along DVD ..www.musicandgames4u.com 144
West L.A. Music .....www.westlamusic.com 13
Wuhan Cymbals .....www.universalpercussion.com .113,115
XL Specialty .....www.xlspec.com 31
Yamaha .....www.yamahadrums.com ...59,60/61,71
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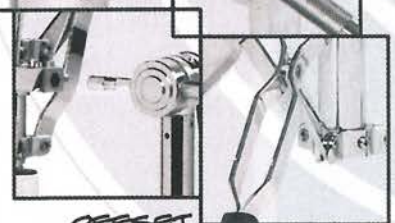

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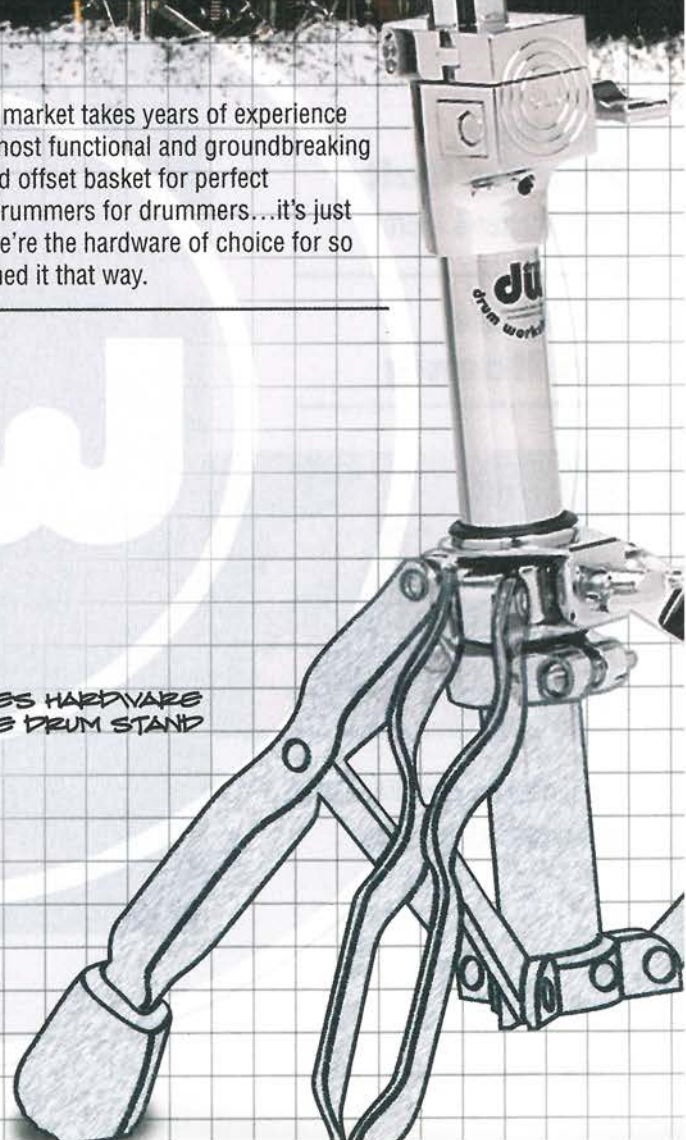

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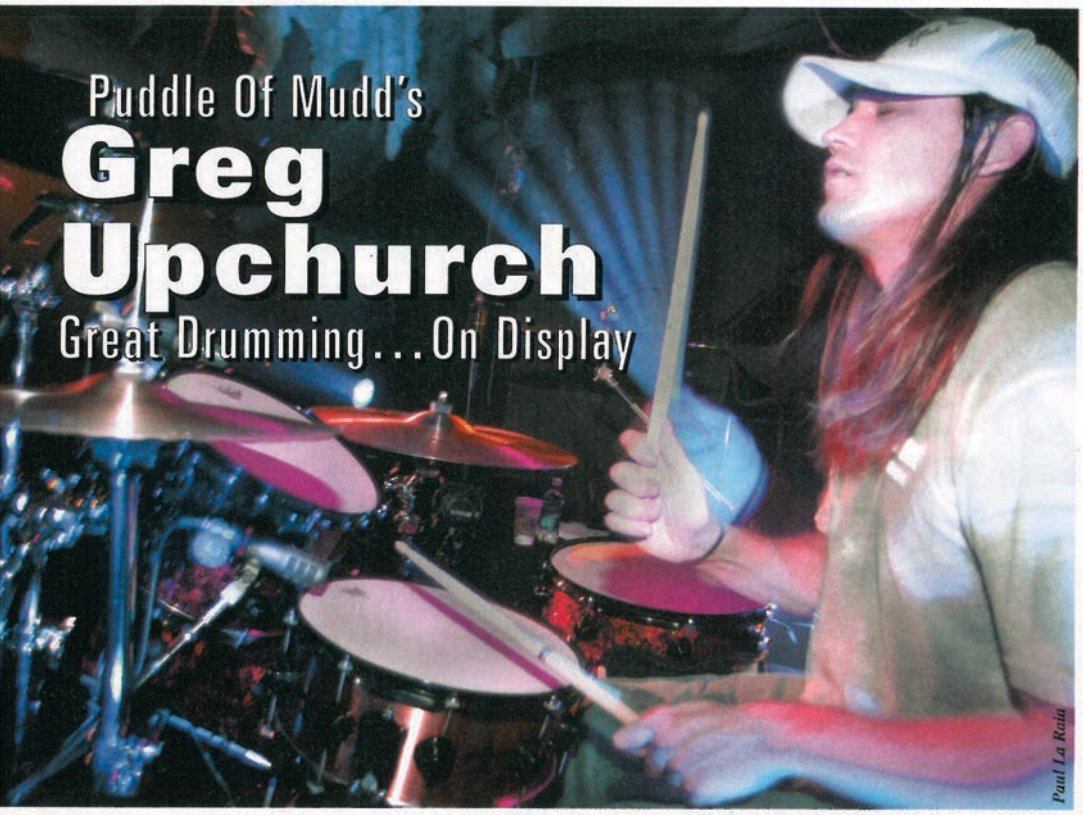
COMING IN **MAY**



Puddle Of Mudd's
Greg Upchurch
Great Drumming...On Display

Paul La Raia

Marcus Miller's
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NYC Jazz Great
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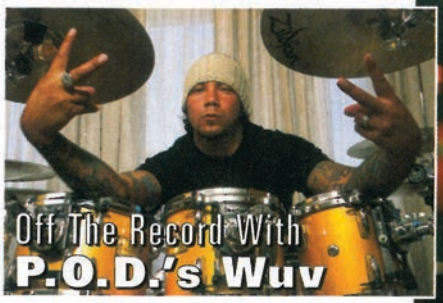
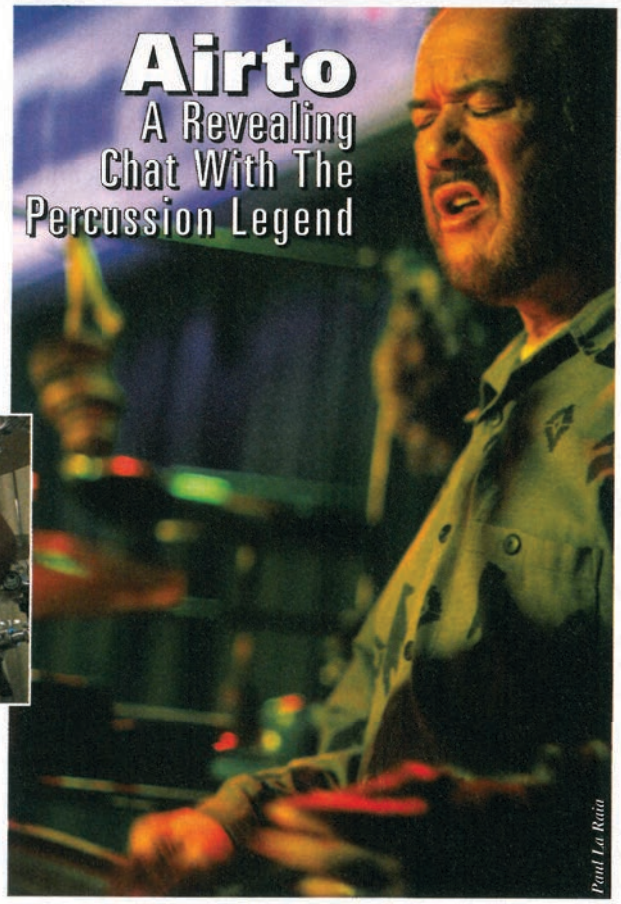


Off The Record With
P.O.D.'s Wuv

Plus Through The Years With Blondie's
Clem Burke



Airto
A Revealing Chat With The Percussion Legend

Paul La Raia

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Jerry Langenfeld of San Marcos, California claims that his extensive setup gives him "almost unlimited possibilities." (Well, maybe everything but the possibility of a quick getaway.)

The electronic megakit starts with a Roland V-Session set, then adds PD6, PD7, PD9, and PD120 drum pads, CY12, CY12RC, and CY14C cymbal pads, and SPD-20 and SPD-S percussion modules. Next come four 8" Pro electronic toms, one snare pad, and one MH6 multi-pad from Hart Dynamics. Sound modules include a Roland TD6, a Roland TD10, and a Yamaha DTXPRESS. It all gets controlled by a 16-channel mixer into a digital-direct recording system, monitored by a 12-channel headphone amp.

Says Jerry, "I have more than fifty different trigger sources, all within arm's reach."

PHOTO REQUIREMENTS

1. Photos must be high-quality and in color. 35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered; Polaroids not accepted. 2. You may send more than one view of the kit. 3. Only show drums, no people. 4. Shoot drums against a neutral background. Avoid "busy" backgrounds. 5. Clearly highlight special attributes of your kit. Send photo(s) to: Drumkit Of The Month, Modern Drummer, 12 Old Bridge Road, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009-1288. Photos cannot be returned.

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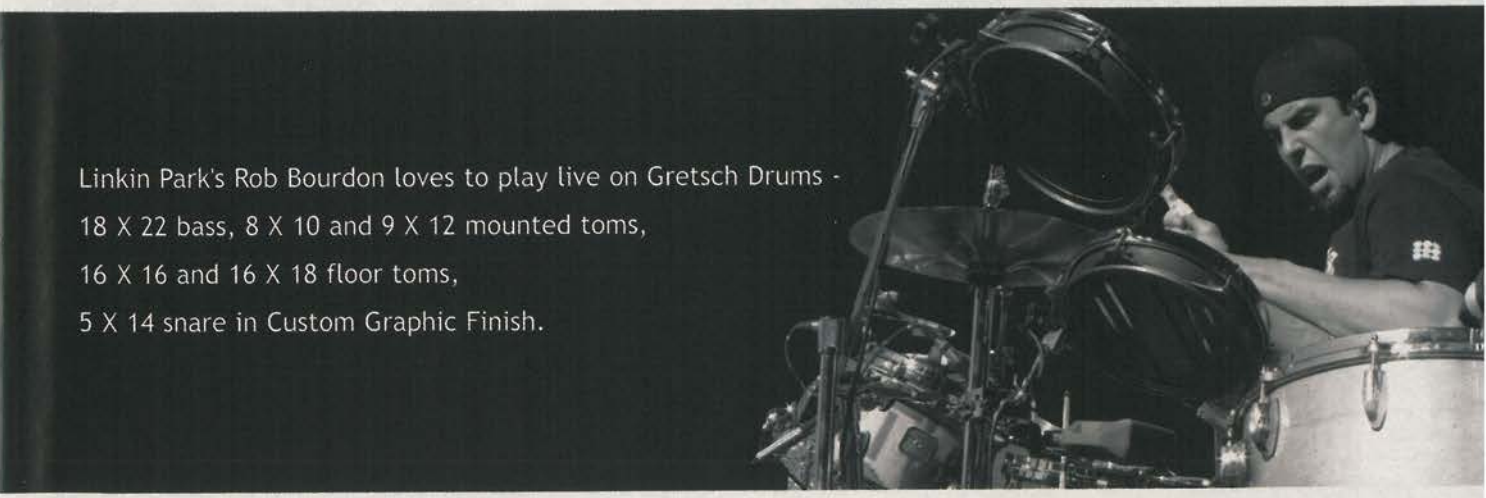

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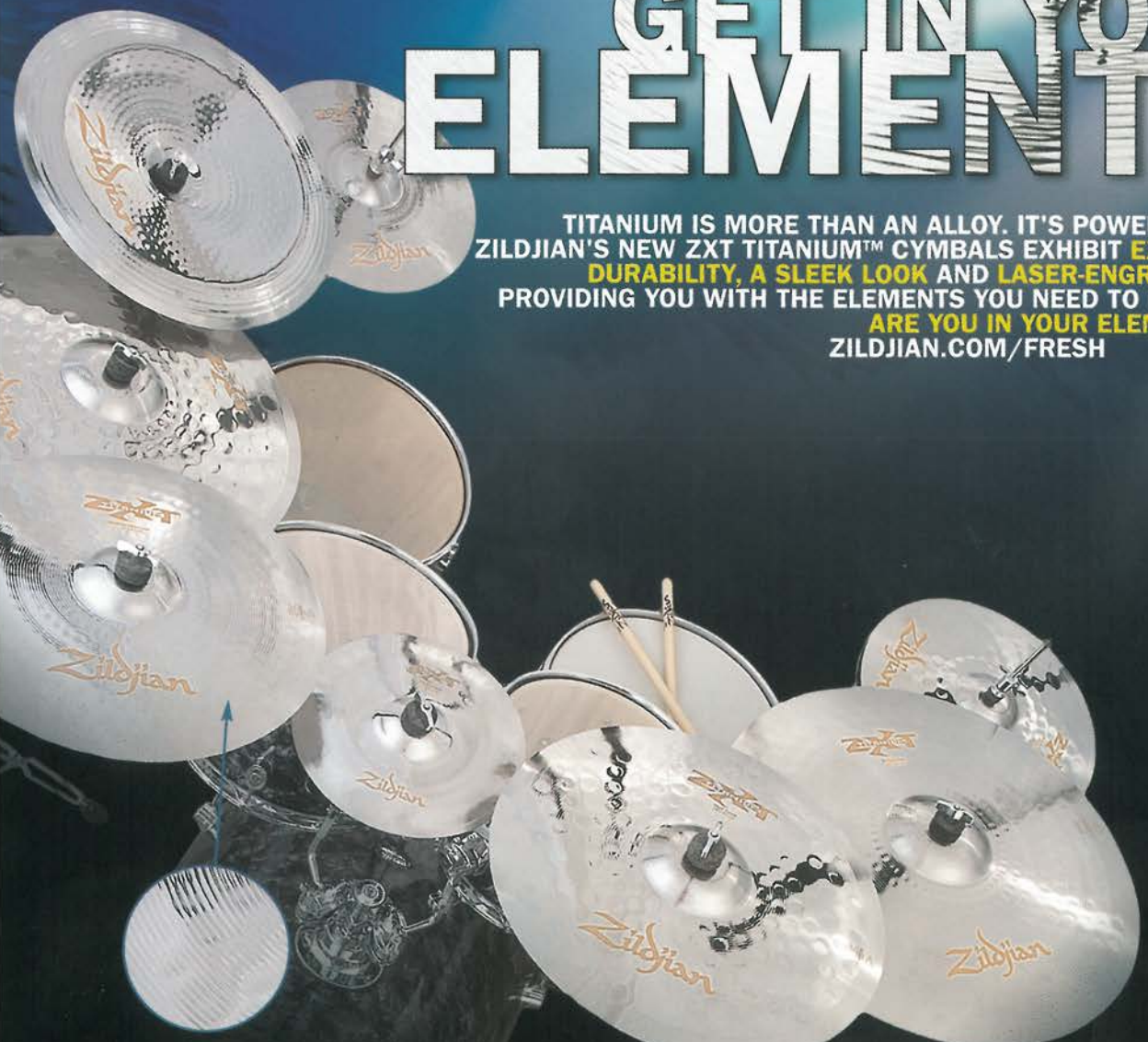

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